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# THE MONTH

FEBRUARY 1953

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LONGMANS

# THE MIND OF W. H. MALLOCK

By  
RUSSELL KIRK

W. H. MALLOCK, the most diligent and determined of English conservative thinkers, and one of the most interesting, has been dead for nearly a generation; and to a good many of the people who happen to read the recent Pelican anthology *Nineteenth Century Opinion*, the scraps of Mallock's moral and political essays included in that little book will be their introduction to Mallock's achievement. He ought to be better known.

How is one to sum up the work of Mallock, which fills twenty-seven volumes, exclusive of ephemerae? Mallock is remembered chiefly for one book, *The New Republic*, and that his first, written while he still was at Oxford—"the most brilliant novel ever written by an undergraduate," says Professor Tillotson, justly, in *Criticism and the Nineteenth Century*. (It is also the most brilliant thing in its genre, after Thomas Love Peacock's books; and perhaps it is equal to Peacock at his best.) But other volumes of Mallock are worth looking into still—his theological and philosophical studies, his didactic novels, his zealous books of political expostulation and social statistics, even his verse.

He had astonishing acuteness, great argumentative power, wide and accurate knowledge, excellent style [George Saintsbury, in *A Second Scrap-Book*, wrote of Mallock]. He might have seemed—he did seem, I believe, to some—to have in him the making of an Aristophanes or a Swift of not so much lessened degree. . . . And yet after the chiefly scandalous success of *The New Republic* he never "came off." To attribute this to the principles he advocated is to nail on those who dislike those principles their own favourite gibe of "the stupid party." We know brains when we see them, even if they belong to the enemy. Exactly what was the flaw, the rot, the "dram of eale," I do not know—it lay in faults of taste and temper, perhaps.

In the past two or three years, interest in Mallock has revived somewhat, probably stimulated by that conservative recrudescence for which Mallock hoped, and the lines of which he predicted. *Is Life Worth Living?*, *Social Equality*, and *The Limits of Pure Democracy*, together with Mallock's charming autobiography, are especially deserving of attention from anyone interested in the conservative intellect. Mallock died in 1923, half forgotten even then; but he has had no equal among English conservative writers since. He spent his life in a struggle against moral and political radicalism; for bulk and thoroughness, quite aside from Mallock's gifts of wit and style, his work is unexcelled if compared with the conservative writings of any country.

By inheritance a country gentleman of ancient family, by inclination a poet, Mallock turned himself into a pamphleteer and a statistician on the Benthamite pattern, all for the sake of the old English life that he describes lovingly in his *Memoirs of Life and Literature*—the splendid houses, the good talk, the wines and dinners, the tranquillity of immemorial ways. This may be what Bagehot called the conservatism of enjoyment; but Mallock defended it by the conservatism of the mind. For its sake he spent his years among Blue books and reports of the income-tax commissioners; he undertook unassisted what the Conservative Political Centre now undertakes as a body. "Throughout almost all his books is to be noticed the aspiration after a Truth which will give the soul something more than 'a dusty answer'; it is everywhere evident," Sir John Squire says. In the search for this truth, Mallock assailed some of the most formidable personages of his day—Huxley, Spencer, Jowett, Kidd, Webb, Shaw. And none of these writers, not even Bernard Shaw, came off well from a bout with Mallock.

In boyhood, Mallock "unconsciously assumed in effect, if not in so many words, that any revolt or protest against the established order was indeed an impertinence, but was otherwise of no great importance." His first aspiration as a conservative was the restoration of classical taste in poetry. But as he grew, he came to realize "that the whole order of things—literary, religious, and social—which the classical poetry assumed, and which I had previously taken as impregnable, was being assailed by forces which it was impossible any longer to ignore." He turned to the defence of orthodox religion against the positivists and other

worshippers of sceptical science. Although all his life inclining to Catholicism ("If Christianity means anything definite—anything more than a mood of precarious sentiment—the only logical form of it is that represented by the *Œcumene* Church of Rome") and observing with much satisfaction that his *Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption* had impelled certain Anglican clergymen to join the Roman communion, still he did not follow them—unless, perhaps, as he lay dying.

It was the Tory radical Ruskin who encouraged feelings of awe and piety in the ultra-conservative Mallock; and Ruskin (as "Mr. Herbert"), preaching from his improvised pulpit in that unforgettable villa of *The New Republic*, expresses the aim of Mallock's general endeavour when he says that we moderns cannot pipe back the gods of the Greeks:

The Atheism of the modern world is not the Atheism of the ancient: the long black night of the winter is not the swift clear night of the vanished summer. The Greek philosopher could not darken his life, for he knew not from what mysterious source the light fell upon it. The modern philosopher does know, and he knows that it is called God, and thus knowing the source of light he can at once quench it. What will be left you then if this light be quenched? Will art, will painting, will poetry be any comfort to you? You have said that these were magic mirrors which reflected back your life for you. Well—will they be any better than the glass mirrors in your drawing-rooms, if they have nothing but the same listless orgy to reflect? For that is all that will be at last in store for you; nay, that is the best thing that possibly can be in store for you; the only alternative being not a listless orgy for the few, but an undreamed-of anarchy for all. I do not fear that, however. Some will be always strong, and some will be always weak; and though, if there is no God, no divine and fatherly source of order, there will be, trust me, no aristocracies, there will still be tyrannies. There will still be rich and poor; and that will then mean happy and miserable; and the poor will be—as I sometimes think they are already—but a mass of groaning machinery, without even the semblance of rationality; and the rich, with only the semblance of it, but a set of gaudy, dancing marionettes, which it is the machinery's one work to keep in motion.

Like Ruskin, Mallock was an artist and a moralist; the notion of material Progress was both ludicrous and hideous to him. "Mr. Saunders" (Professor Clifford), in *The New Republic*, defines

progress as "such improvement as can be verified by statistics, just as education is such knowledge as can be tested by examinations." Mallock saw how statistical fallacies were destroying the civilization reflected in the marvellous conversations of *The New Republic*. Sixty years later, in all England scarcely a country house remained where such a company might meet in comfort—nor, indeed, was much of the society left that could talk thus; he glimpsed this prospect; and so Mallock, "something of a man of the world, something of a poet, a scholar, a logician, a stylist, a critic, fastidious but not heartless, a realist with a touch of the mystic" (as Squire describes him) cudgelled socialists and positivists for fifty years. *The New Republic*, which had made Jowett and Huxley and Tyndall and Clifford wince terribly, was followed by a comical satire upon the positivists, *The New Paul and Virginia, or Positivism on an Island*, in which Mallock shipwrecked the unfortunate Professor W. K. Clifford (under the name of Professor Paul Darnley) together with Virginia St. John, a young woman of lively antecedents, who "found herself, at the age of thirty, mistress of nothing except a large fortune." Next, in 1880, he published *Is Life Worth Living?*, probably the most serious and searching attack to which the spirit of positivism has been subjected. He exposed atheism and agnosticism to an analysis calculated to demonstrate their results in the realm of morals, appealing "to the intellect, a sense of humour, and what is called a knowledge of the world" rather than to pure religious emotion.

The message of *Is Life Worth Living?* is a more thorough expounding of the author's early declaration of faith: that morality and happiness cannot subsist without the ramparts of supernatural religion. The "band-work" which positivists cry up as a substitute for piety never can build a *Civitas Dei*.

Social conditions, it is true, we may expect will go on improving; we may hope that the social machinery will come gradually to run more smoothly. But unless we know something positive to the contrary, the outcome of all this progress may be nothing but a more undisturbed ennui or a more soulless sensuality. The rose-leaves may be laid on more smoothly, and yet the man that lies on them may be wearier or more degraded.

When man loses sight of moral ends, his degradation commences. Self-reproach comes, without possibility of absolution; and self-weariness; and indifference. The positivistic thinkers,

whose early training has been religious, and who know little enough of the world, imagine that their own tame and narrow emotions are all that humanity has to discipline. If they succeed in revolutionizing the moral convictions and character of most men, they will learn how close the beast lies beneath the skin of humanity. Even those among whom habitual desire to do right still operates are corrupted by the moral indifference which follows on the heels of irreligion.

The whole prospect that environs them has become morally colourless; and they discern in their attitude towards the world without, what it must one day come to be towards the world within. A state of mind like this is no dream. It is a malady of the modern world—a malady of our own generation, which can escape no eyes that will look upon it. It is betraying itself every moment around us, in conversation, in literature, and in legislation.

Against the logic of scientific negation, there is no recourse but to face the grim question bravely: to ask ourselves whether orthodox religion is true or false. Can lost faith be recovered? Are we to accept the positivists' contention that external proofs must determine the validity of religion, or may the tradition and discipline of the Church convince us that atheism is itself unscientific? The man who venerates his ancestors and thinks of his posterity will stand up resolutely against these Vandals of the intellect, who are reducing modern civilization to ashes:

Upon this Empire, as upon that of Rome, calamity has at last fallen. A host of intellectual barbarians has burst in upon it, and has occupied by force the length and breadth of it. The result has been astounding. Had the invaders been barbarians only, they might have been repelled easily; but they were barbarians armed with the most powerful weapons of civilization. They were a phenomenon new to history: they showed us real knowledge in the hands of real ignorance; and the work of the combination thus far has been ruin, not reorganization. Few great movements at the beginning have been conscious of their own true tendency; but no great movement has mistaken it like modern Positivism. Seeing just too well to have the true instinct of blindness, and too ill to have the proper guidance from sight, it has tightened its clutch upon the world of thought, only to impart to it its own confusion. What lies before men now is to reduce this confusion to order, by a patient and calm employment of the intellect.

After the publication of this moving book, Mallock turned for some years from philosophy and morals to political economy and sociology. The rise of the Social Democratic Federation, the popularity of Henry George's ideas, and even the economic notions of his old mentor Ruskin alarmed him powerfully: *Social Equality* was the result, appearing in 1882. Mallock's ideas underwent some refinement, and his tables of statistics some amendment, during the years that elapsed before the publication of his last sociological volume, *The Limits of Pure Democracy* (1919); but his principles and his method did not alter. Mallock's aim was to establish a conservative system of thought on scientific grounds. The radicals, claiming science for their own, were inventing or warping statistics to suit their purposes; the old Tory contempt for political economy tended to keep Conservatives from answering false statistics with true; and Mallock, with little encouragement from most Conservative leaders, set himself to redress the balance.

Almost from its beginnings, the Conservative Party had been uncertain in its grasp of political economy. Burke had possessed an admirable mastery of the subject, and Pitt had understood finance; but (except for Huskisson and Herries, neither of whom was a proper leader of men) from their time to the later years of Lord Salisbury's government, economists had been Liberals, and the Liberals had trounced the Conservatives repeatedly in this field.

The difficulties in the way of formulating a true scientific conservatism, which the masses shall be able to comprehend, I am the last person to ignore [Mallock wrote in 1920]. There is the difficulty of formulating true general principles. There is the difficulty of collecting and verifying the statistical and historical facts, to which general principles must be accommodated. There is the difficulty of bringing moral and social sentiments into harmony with objective conditions which no sentiments can permanently alter. There is the difficulty of transforming many analyses of fact into a synthesis moral and rational, by the light of which human beings can live; and feeling my way slowly, I now attempted to indicate what the nature of such a synthesis would be. In so doing I felt that political problems of life reunited themselves with those which are commonly called religious, and with which, during my earlier years, my mind had been alone engaged.

Now that the old Liberals were succumbing to theories of socialism, the need for a conservative economics was desperate.

The old conservative arguments are obsolete, Mallock wrote. For the prescriptive rights, the traditional influences, the ancient respect for property and order, all have been shattered by successive waves of political and economic thought ever since Rousseau. No longer can conservatives rely upon these ancient verities: our traditions have to be sheltered now, rather than utilized as defences. Ideology and "scientific" system and statistical method have been employed exclusively by the innovators. "All that bears any semblance of organized thought or system has belonged to the attacking party; and, force excepted, it has been met by nothing but an obsolete dogmatism that cannot even explain itself," wrote Mallock in *Social Equality*. It is of no avail to protest that the Radical doctrines are merely an appeal to envy; that is begging the question; for if the doctrine of equality be true, "we must consider envy to be as sound a guide in politics as reverence by religious men is considered to be in religion." The supreme issue to be determined, then, is simply this: is the doctrine of social equality true, or is it false? Are the radicals right when they say that the perfection of society requires equality? Would civilization, and would the poor, gain from the establishment of equality? What is the relationship between progress and equality? To some extent, Mallock advances answers to all these questions in *Social Equality*; but his arguments are strengthened in *Labour and the Popular Welfare* (1894).

When it is scientifically considered—so runs Mallock's argument in all his political works—the doctrine of equality will be exposed as a fallacy; for equality is the death of progress. Throughout history, progress of every sort, cultural and economic, has been produced by the desire of men for *inequality*. Without the possibility of inequality, a people continue on the dreary level of bare subsistence, like Irish peasants; granted inequality, the small minority of men of ability turn barbarism into civilization. Equality benefits no one. It frustrates men of talent; and it reduces the poor to a poverty still more abject. In a densely-populated civilized state, it means near-starvation for the poor. For inequality produces the wealth of civilized communities: it provides the motive which induces men of superior abilities to exert themselves for the general benefit. About one-sixteenth of the British

population, in this age, is responsible for producing two-thirds of the national income.

How is it that socialists fail to recognize the immense value of superior abilities, which would be suppressed under a system of social equality? Their fundamental error is the labour theory of wealth, as expounded by Marx, who got its rudiment from Ricardo. Labour (Marx notwithstanding) is *not* the cause of most of our wealth: unaided, labour produces merely a bare subsistence. Man is not a labouring animal naturally: without especial incentive, he works as little as will enable him to sustain life. "Labour in itself is no more the cause of wealth than Shakespeare's pen was the cause of his writing *Hamlet*. The cause is in the motives, of which labour is the outward index." The principal motive is inequality; and the principal producer of wealth is not Labour, but Ability. Mallock defends the importance of great men against Macaulay and Spencer. Individual genius is a tremendous social force; and the talents of great men save the poor from sinking into barbarism. Reduce great men, or merely men of energy and talent, to the boredom of equality, and you reduce the mass of men proportionately.

Ability, the chief productive faculty, is a natural monopoly: it cannot be redistributed by legislation, though it may be crushed by positive law. "Ability is a kind of exertion on the part of the individual which is capable of affecting simultaneously the labour of an indefinite number of individuals, and thus hastening or perfecting the accomplishment of an indefinite number of tasks." It is the faculty, in short, which directs labour; which produces inventions, devises methods, supplies imagination, organizes production and distribution and protection, maintains order. In a civilized state, Ability and Labour cannot exist separately; and therefore one cannot estimate with perfect exactness the proportion of wealth produced by either; but of the national income (in 1894) of thirteen hundred million pounds, whilst eight hundred million pounds at least was demonstrably the product of Ability, Labour produced not more than five hundred million pounds. Labour without Ability is simply the primitive effort of natural man to obtain subsistence. Recognizing that mankind cannot prosper by mere labour, society hitherto has endeavoured to encourage Ability by protecting its incentives.

Capital, so bitterly assailed by socialists, is simply the produc-

tion-fund of all society; it is the control of Intellect over Labour. Inheritance of property, detested by the party of "progress," is one of the most important of incentives to Ability, satisfying the instinct of bequest and simultaneously providing for saving and the accumulation of capital. By admitting the claims of Ability, society has obtained tremendous gains for the labouring classes, which Labour unaided never could have attained. During the first sixty years of the nineteenth century, the income of the labouring classes, *per capita*, rose so greatly that by 1860 it equalled the total income of *all* classes in 1800—as if, in 1800, the entire wealth of Britain had been divided among the labouring people. And the process has continued. In 1880, the income of the labouring classes alone was equal to the income that *all* classes had received in 1850. "This represents a progress, which the wildest Socialist would never have dreamed of promising." Indeed, not only has the wealth of the labouring classes increased absolutely, but it has grown proportionately; the rich and the middle classes now have a smaller share of the total income than formerly; and this is because Labour, ceasing to be simple unskilled manual effort, is acquiring special talents and therefore sharing in the rewards of Ability.

If this process continues (Mallock wrote in 1894) for thirty years longer, at the end of that time the labourers will have their present incomes doubled. Yet the uninformed cupidity of the poorer classes threatens progress. It is natural to seek greater prosperity, even through the agency of government; but if this fancied prosperity is attained by despoiling the other elements in society, it will stifle Ability and will lead, in short order, to general poverty and eventual barbarism. The demand for an absolute social equality, on the premise of a fancied natural justice, is as ruinous as the pretended economy to be obtained by abolishing the Monarchy, thus saving a million pounds a year—which, however, comes to less than sixpence halfpenny per head of population. "It costs each individual less to maintain the Queen than it would cost him to drink her health in a couple of pots of porter." The socialist, who is willing to abolish the traditional government of Britain in order to relieve a labouring man of paying sixpence, would commit a folly quite as grave in abolishing the incentives to Ability.

These ideas are applied to the management of affairs in *Aris-*

*tocracy and Evolution* (1898). Sociologists generally have ignored the fact of congenital inequality, Mallock begins. More than ever before, in our society the direction of the economy is in the hands of a comparative few. Our wage-capital, and our whole system of production, require direction by a small number of men, who represent Ability. This is both just and expedient. The "party of progress" has foolishly depreciated the role of strong and intelligent men in civilization. Really they are the mind of society; public opinion as the spontaneous creation of the masses never has existed; what we call public opinion forms round exceptional men. Upon the encouragement and recognition of these men depends civilization. The average man should be taught to embellish his lot, not to endeavour to escape from it. Democracy exhibits a perilous tendency to repudiate leadership —to insist that the men who manage great affairs shall be

exceptional only for such qualities as practical activity and a quick apprehension of the wishes of other people, which would enable them to do what their many-headed master bade them; but they would have to be wanting in any strength of mind or originality which might prompt them to act out of harmony with their master's temper at the moment, or what is the same thing, to any acts beyond their master's comprehension, even though such acts might be for his future benefit.

(How often the twentieth-century democracies, preferring mediocrity and equivocation in their public men, justify Mallock's foreboding.) Abolish this true leadership of Ability restrained by a traditional moral and political system, and the labouring classes, after an interval of terror in which they would be helpless as so many sheep, would find themselves submitting to new masters whose rule would be harder, more arbitrary, and less humane than the old.

Though our society, like all civilized communities, requires aristocratic principles for its successful administration, nevertheless it remains a society of free association and voluntary endeavour; the necessity of direction by a comparative few does not bring about the subjection of the many. This is because the services of Ability are secured by adequate rewards: compulsion is not required where men are persuaded by incentives. The Fabians confess their readiness to efface this voluntary co-operation; they speak, instead, of a "law of civic duty" which implies

punishment of those who shirk. But though socialism may be able to enforce Labour by the task-master's whip, no state can compel Ability to perform its natural function. Under compulsion, Ability sinks to the level of mere Labour; no man will exert unusual talents if he is to get no reward; and Sidney Webb's escape into economic slavery (by which the Fabians think they evade the fear of want) really would result in permanent want for everyone. Mallock's *A Critical Examination of Socialism* (1908), in which these concepts are explained, remains perhaps the most lucid dissection of collectivistic errors.

In *The Limits of Pure Democracy* (1918), Mallock's social ideas are summarized in the light of the Russian Revolution. The primary producer of our modern wealth, vastly augmented since the beginning of the nineteenth century, is Directive Mind; yet Directive Mind, or Ability, receives as its reward no more than one-fifth of this increment. Mankind ought not to complain at the rewards of Directive Mind, but to be surprised that they are so modest. In politics and in productive endeavour, the authority of the few is derived not from any merely legal sanction, or from any theory of divine right, but from nature: the aristocracy or oligarchy of modern times is a phenomenon of general benefit.

In any great and civilized State *Democracy only knows itself through the co-operation of oligarchy*, . . . the many can prosper only through the participation in benefits which, in the way alike of material comfort, opportunity, culture, and social freedom, would be possible for no one unless the many submitted themselves to the influence or authority of the super-capable few.

Socialism first repudiates this legitimate leadership and then, in reaction from its own failure, demands a dictator. Out of the application of pure democracy in Russia will come a host of squalid new oligarchs, dominated by a tyrant who, secretly repudiating the ideas upon which he rose, still will continue to exhort the masses to "revolution" and "democracy" while he proceeds to stamp out resistance to a new absolutism, necessary because revolution has made the life of everyone intolerable.

From the twin menace of atheism and social retrogression we can be delivered if we have the courage to face our tasks. On the one hand, we must revive in our own hearts those religious convictions which are not truly inconsonant with modern knowledge, but transcend it; on the other, we must counteract the

socialists' appeal to envy by convincing the mass of men that society is conducted for their benefit. Mallock unites the issues of religious faith and social conservatism in his later novels, so little read nowadays. Agnosticism clears the way for social chaos. Mistaking the lessons of modern science, the positivists and their allies throw men upon their private moral resources:

Science having, as they supposed, expelled God from nature, they practically looked upon the change that was thus effected as comparable to man's loss of a sort of celestial schoolmaster, who had indeed managed his business for him, but in many ways was very objectionable; and the schoolmaster being dead they conceived of the human race as left in a free, even if in rather a forlorn condition, to construct for itself, in defiance of nature, a little private universe of its own, like a sort of Dotheboys Hall which has got rid of its Squeers, and whose orphans propose henceforward to educate and to board themselves. But such Agnostics practically failed to realize what was in theory even for themselves a truism, that the precise train of reasoning which freed them from an intelligent God, reduced them to mere puppets of that nature which it was their enlightened programme to oppose.

So Mallock wrote in *The Reconstruction of Belief* (1905). The new democracy of Dotheboys Hall refuses to be conducted on principles of pure reason; fierce personal passion and contempt for civilization are its moral characteristics. And the social arrangements of the "party of progress," compelling everyone to trade on his private stock of reason, denying the natural inequality between man and man, repudiating leadership and mistaking confiscation for augmentation of wealth, are the mundane equivalents of the spiritual anarchy that positivism invites. Mallock endeavoured, over fifty years, to counteract this intellectual revolution by an anti-revolution, a campaign of candid and lucid propaganda, trusting that "the mischief, religious, social, and political, which 'advanced' thought has done, may in time, by a rational development of conservative thought, be undone, and the true faiths be revived, on which the sanctities, the stabilities, and the civilization of the social order depend." He did not underestimate the difficulty of this conservative labour, but he never lost hope, even though he lived amid what seemed to many the dissolution of English culture.

The plausible democratic optimism and evolutionary progres-

sivism of Benjamin Kidd (who was the especial object of Mallock's criticism in *Aristocracy and Evolution*), popularized in Kidd's *Social Evolution* (1894), had a much stronger immediate influence upon public opinion than had Mallock's works, or even Herbert Spencer's—and Mallock knew it. Kidd and his school, disregarding being for the hope of becoming, abandoned the past for a complacent faith in the future. Mallock understood that the race was not to such as Kidd. But after the turn of the century, Mallock must have felt himself more and more to be the tiring champion of a proscribed minority: social Darwinians dominated the English and American mind until Sir Edward Grey saw the lights going out all over Europe.

From the evolutionist's viewpoint neither man nor society was of a determinate nature and therefore could not be studied as such [remarks Professor Ross Hoffman in his penetrating little book *The Spirit of Politics and the Future of Freedom*]. Hence conservative philosophy of the kind that examines the nature of institutions and seeks to apprehend the principles by which they live, to make judgments upon them by reference to the permanent norms of human nature, and to discover the means of conserving and prospering the good values, came to seem irrelevant to the subject of discussion. That is the prime reason why there was so little conservative political and social philosophy worthy of the name in the early years of this century.

After the hubris of Kidd, the nemesis of Sarajevo.

To some extent, Mallock's trust rested upon the expectation of steady material improvement in the condition of the whole population, as had been so conspicuously the course of the economy between 1850 and 1890; but the lagging of British industry after 1900, and the terrible blow of the war, further inclined the poorer classes toward the idea of a radical redistribution of income, rather than a co-operative increase of it. Even so, Mallock did not despair; for he knew that ideas, in the long run, have immense power. If the conservative mind does indeed contrive to arrest the decay of Western civilization, Mallock will deserve great credit for being the author of a reasoned conservative apologetic. After the first flush of enthusiasm, he did not expect to move mountains:

Arguments are like the seed, or like the soul, as Paul conceived of it, which he compared to seed. They are not quickened unless

they die. As long as they remain for us in the form of arguments they do no work. Their work begins only, after a time and in secret, when they have sunk down into the memory, and have been left to lie there; when the hostility and distrust they were regarded with dies away; when, unperceived, they melt into the mental system, and, becoming part of oneself, effect a turning round of the soul.

Mallock's books have helped in such a subtle transformation of the modern intellect, now setting itself against moral nihilism and material collectivism; and their influence may continue to filter through society, the temper of the time being what it is.

## 'EVEN TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH'

By

TRISTRAM HILLIER

**I**N THE YEAR 1922 I was staying in Peking with my father for some months during the interval of leaving school and going to Cambridge.

One day my father asked me if I would like to visit a Trappist Monastery. "The Abbot," he said, "is an old friend of mine whom I have not seen for many years, because the journey is long and has become too arduous for me now, but he is a wise and delightful man whose company repays the inconvenience of reaching his Monastery. In any case, at your age a tiring journey is a matter of small consideration, and it will be an opportunity for you to see something of the China that lies beyond the reach of the average European traveller." I told him that it would interest me very much to see the place, and he said that he would in that case make the necessary arrangements for a team of mules to meet me at the railhead some two hundred miles from Peking. "I am informed," he continued, "that few bandits have been seen in that neighbourhood recently and you should be able to cover the

remaining distance within a week. Take Chu-Er (one of the house boys) with you as interpreter; he is a good fellow and won't rob you unreasonably. I think too," he added, "that it would be wise to have a companion; what about young P. at the Legation? I should suggest it to him if you think he would be congenial."

A week later I set out from Peking with P., who had just come down from Oxford and was staying with his brother, a secretary in the Legation. He was apt to be condescending towards me at first, but the shared discomforts and the enforced intimacy of our journey destroyed in a couple of days the haughty barrier of Christchurch and the seniority of five years.

For some twelve hours we travelled in a hot and crowded train, passing at first through fertile valleys of rice and "gauliang," dotted with villages of pale dried mud and splashed with the faded blue rags of the coolies who worked in their fields.

The eternal theme of Chinese landscape is there; the almost ethereal green of young crops imposed upon a setting of delicate ochre, the subtle patchwork of cotton robes, ceruleum, cobalt and ultramarine, and the occasional resonant note of deep red walls where some temple rises like a flame. The country became more rugged as the day wore on, fields gave way to an arid plain and stony river beds replaced the neat canals of the valley we had left. To the south appeared the Great Wall of China, rising and falling over the bare grey hills as far as the eye could see.

Soon after nightfall we reached the terminus of the railway and alighted upon the patch of beaten mud that served as a platform to find ourselves encircled by an evil-smelling mob who pressed around us in gaping curiosity and threatened to deprive us of all power of movement.

Chu-Er raised a tremendous commotion in the accepted manner of a good servant who seeks to "keep his master's face" and ensure that fitting respect is accorded to him as a traveller of consequence, while P. and I stood for all the world like a pair of sheep whose points are being assessed at a country fair.

Finally, the mob divided, in no way disconcerted by the blows which were administered by P.'s boy to enforce a passage, and there appeared our muleteers who loaded their beasts with our baggage while we followed Chu-Er on foot to the village nearby.

That night we spent in the comparative comfort of a missionary's house, and at dawn our little caravan set out.

I can remember, after an interval of so many years, no more than a few details of that journey, but the general impression that still remains vividly in my mind is that of an overwhelming sense of distance, not as regards our own brief trek which lasted only some six or seven days, but in the great land that surrounded us.

For the first day or two our way led up a dry river bed strewn with immense boulders and twisting through a barren country with few signs of life. Generally, we reached a primitive inn or some peasant's shack by nightfall and only once, I think, did we sleep in the open; sometimes we came upon a village where we could replenish our stock of provisions with goat's milk, vegetables or rice, but these were few and very poor.

There was a certain monotony in the landscape, but such grandeur that I was at once fascinated and repelled. From a high pass we would gaze across endless mountain ranges that stretched grey and relentless and utterly silent, the colour of an elephant's hide, to an horizon from which I knew that they would continue so to stretch with the infinite repetition of sea-waves.

We would traverse a valley strewn with huge boulders, torrid and devoid of any living root or plant, and cross a range of hills only to find another valley so similar to the last that the mind became confused and distance seemed to have no meaning.

In the midst of one such valley I was startled by a sudden shout from one of the muleteers who pointed to our rear and fell to thrashing his laden beast into a canter. I turned in alarmed expectation of some attack, but what I beheld was perhaps more terrifying than a horde of brigands. The sky above and ahead of us was a clear and limpid blue, but behind us at a distance of some miles there was a line as though drawn with some celestial ruler beyond which Heaven and Earth were blotted out by one vast curtain of impenetrable black.

As I stared in horror, the warm light of day began to fade and give place to an unearthly radiance that bathed the valley in a sort of lunar glow, casting our shadows far ahead across the broken ground and painting each man's face with the pallor of death. At the same time there came a murmur which seemed to fill the air about us like the wailing of lost souls.

I stood there for no more than a few seconds before Chu-Er had seized my arm: "Run, Master, run," he gasped, and dragged me forward with him. Ahead of us, perhaps five hundred yards

away, lay a dry river bed, and towards this I stumbled amid running men and beasts, aware only that some elemental force pursued us.

Once in the river bed the Chinese flung themselves upon their stomachs and buried their faces in their arms, while Chu-Er bade me do the same, and a moment later all about us was as dark as night. The murmur rose to an angry roar and a mighty wind swept over us, flinging stones and debris above our heads and searing with its fury the very surface of the earth.

This lasted for perhaps five minutes to be followed by a solid sheet of water that seemed to beat our prostrate bodies into the ground, and in little more than a quarter of an hour we arose to contemplate a silent valley under a serene sky. A couple of mules that had broken from the team were lying upon the lip of the river bank where they had been thrown by the violence of the wind, and, pinned down by their loads, they were struggling to rise. Our baggage lay scattered far and wide, but otherwise that desolate valley had sunk again into its immemorial calm.

We presented to one another a strange sight as we rose to our feet, because a cloudburst had followed close upon the heels of the dust storm, for such it was, and plastered us with a coating of mud so that we looked for all the world like statues fashioned from the deposit of the river bed.

I never saw a dust storm before or since to equal that one, and I have never heard of the coincidence of rain which turned the dust into a stream of mud from Heaven. It was a subdued and uncomfortable party that collected scattered items of baggage and resumed its journey through that eerie land.

The muleteers assured us that we would reach before nightfall a village in which the comforts of a well-appointed inn would atone for all that we had endured, and shortly after sunset we perceived our destination in a fold of the hills. An inn, it is true, there was, and since it was no more filthy than any other we had encountered we were grateful, in our muddy and exhausted state, for the shelter it promised to afford us.

The average Chinese inn consists of a courtyard in which pigs, goats and emaciated hens root about in competition with scrofulous babies for chance supplement to their meagre diet, and around which are built the living quarters of the publican,

his kitchen and stables and a room, or in rare cases two rooms, for the accommodation of travellers.

This room is divided into equal parts whereof one is occupied by a raised platform of mud brick, the "Kang," which serves as the communal bed of all who require shelter and under which there are grates for charcoal which serve both to heat the "Kang" and cook the guests' meals. Everyone carries his own bedding and the servants of more important travellers cook meals for their masters in the family kitchen.

Chu-Er set up a tremendous din as we arrived, and found fault, as indeed he might, with the appointments of the inn, the poverty of the village, the uncouth inhabitants and even our host and his enormous progeny, but we had grown accustomed to this as a preface to any night's repose, for it is the traditional and anticipated formula whereby a good servant will impress the company with his master's importance and fulfil the sacred task of "Keeping Face."

The storm died as abruptly as the dust-storm of the afternoon and our host, venerable and benign with white whiskers that reached to his waist, led us to our sleeping quarters which we were relieved to find untenanted. He courteously inquired our age, insisted in the approved manner that we looked far older, and left us to rest while Chu-Er prepared a mess of rice for our evening meal.

No sooner had we composed ourselves for sleep, however, than there arose an uproar in the courtyard which far surpassed the commotion of our arrival. Yells were exchanged with ungovernable fury, mules stamped, pigs squealed and children fled screaming to their mothers. Pandemonium reigned without and the confusion grew momentarily wilder as more and yet more voices were added to the tumult. Suddenly silence fell, and the door opened to admit a gentle little man who bowed politely to us both and warmed his hands before the charcoal fire. The crowd dispersed happily, the beasts were stabled and a servant carried in a roll of bedding which he arranged in a corner of the "Kang."

The proprietor appeared at the door to assure himself that all was well and smiled complacently as though to say: "Here is a man who is accustomed to travel, a man of the world who understands how things should be done, and brings credit to my house."

Our privacy was lost, but there was plenty of room on the "Kang," so we rolled ourselves in our quilted blankets and fell contentedly asleep.

I was awoken some hours later by prodigious snores and the uncomfortable proximity of an evil-smelling body which leaned heavily against my back. Each time I shifted position my warm and unsavoury bedmate would roll closer, and being unable in the darkness to rearrange my mattress at a greater distance I finally resigned myself to the unwelcome contact and slept soundly until dawn.

When, with the first rays of light I awoke, however, and turned to look at my companion, who continued to snore with a positively thunderous rhythm, I gave such a roar of laughter as to startle my companions abruptly from their sleep.

Stretched beside me in an attitude of affectionate abandonment, an expression of beatitude upon her swarthy features, stinking to high Heaven and quivering in every limb with the reverberation of her stupendous snores, lay an immense sow.

She had crept, no doubt, through the paper-covered window, already broken and displaying a warm interior which compared well with the comfortless courtyard outside, cast modesty to the winds and trusted to her maidenly charms to ensure her welcome in my bed.

A hearty smack upon the buttocks brought her grunting and indignant to her feet, a moment's reflection sufficed to persuade her that her sex would receive scant respect in such company, and, with a final snort of outraged dignity, she leaped heavily through the casement into the mud beneath.

"This evening, Master," Chu-Er announced to me one day, "we shall arrive at the Valley of the Monks," and as the sun was setting we reached a high pass towards which we had climbed for many hours. We had travelled all day through the dry and rocky country to which we had become accustomed, and at the summit of the pass we gazed again on every side at the familiar sweep of endless grey peaks, but at our feet lay a sight so strange that I was constrained to rub my eyes and wonder whether I were not dreaming of some half-remembered scene in the peaceful valley of the Loire.

Far below us, set like a jewel amid that arid waste, lay a corner

of France. A line of stately poplars followed a tiny stream from whose green banks rose terraces of vine. The upper slopes of the valley had been tilled and here and there a crop of young wheat shimmered in the evening sunlight. Far in the distance lay a group of buildings sheltered among trees, and from their midst rose the whitewashed steeple of a little church.

A bell was tolling and its gentle sound was carried faintly to our ears far above; a few small figures wandered along the dusty road that wound from the foot of the pass. Chu-Er informed me that this was the Valley of the Monks, and his information was not as superfluous as might be supposed for I had otherwise thought it to be a mirage.

It was almost dark when we reached the Monastery gate which was opened to us by a Chinaman in Trappist robes. He admitted us through a wicket in the heavy door and led us silently along a paved cloister to a room in which he asked us to be seated and await the Abbot whom he would inform forthwith of our arrival. A table covered with American cloth stood in the centre of this room, varnished yellow chairs were ranged against the white-washed walls upon one of which hung the appalling oleograph of the Sacred Heart that is so inevitable a part of any convent parlour, and a Crucifix hung over the door.

After a few minutes the Abbot entered, greeted us courteously, and inquired whether we had made a journey without mishap. He spoke affectionately of my father whom he had not seen for many years.

"There was a time when I made frequent journeys to Peking," he said, "every three or four years I would visit the Bishop, sometimes more often, and usually," he smiled, "to ask for money; always I needed more and more money for my Church, but now I have enough and my legs are grown too old to scale those mountain passes. Your father too, he was a great walker in his time, but he is no longer so young; why, it must be fifteen years now since he was here. Ah well, we will meet in Heaven next, please God, where the paths will be easier for our old legs."

A well-bred Frenchman with a noble head, his intelligent face was so serene that it was difficult to estimate his age. From what I had heard of him I judged that he must have been seventy or so, but his twinkling eyes, his gay laugh and untroubled countenance had the freshness almost of youth.

The door opened to admit the lay-brother who had first received us, and who now carried a tray with bottles and glasses and a rough loaf of bread which he placed upon the table.

"Come," said the Abbot, "you must be in need of refreshment. We are far from France but we manage, nevertheless, to produce a modest little wine. It is not unlike the local wine of my own home in Gascony, and since we have no means of adulterating it here it has at any rate the merit of purity."

After our long day's march it was indeed delicious, and the rough new bread was its most perfect complement.

"Vespers," said our host, "are nearly over, but perhaps you would like to attend Benediction, and afterwards I will present to you Père François whom I have designated to act in my place as your host. You must forgive me that I do not myself fulfil that pleasant role, but I have many matters to attend to, even in this small community."

The little church was simple in the extreme, long and rather low with whitewashed walls and a vaulted roof; pews fashioned of unstained wood rose in tiers at each side of the aisle to form the monks' choir, and near the door were a couple of rough benches at which we knelt.

There was utter silence when we entered and the monks were bowed in prayer, but a moment later a single tenor voice soared upwards on the opening notes of that lovely hymn, "Salve, Regina, Mater Misericordiae," which had been set to music that I had never before heard, peculiar to the Monastery and oddly fitting in its strange and plaintive rhythm to that unusual place.

After the opening bars the whole community began to sing, and from outside the church came the sound of approaching voices which had taken up the strain. Through the open doors there presently filed a score of monks, still gently chanting that lovely song as they marched two by two to their places in the choir. Their rough brown habits and their bare feet were stained with the earth they had been tilling, and upon their shoulders they carried the implements of their labour; scythes, pitchforks and spades.

Of the many ceremonies I have attended in churches of every denomination all over the world I have never seen one that impressed me so profoundly as the Benediction that evening in that remote place. It was so essentially in the spirit of Benediction,

a blessing asked in quiet song by men weary with peaceful toil and bearing yet the smell and stain of that earth from which they had laboured to produce their food, surrounded by the simple tools of the peasant in the church which their own hands had built. It seemed to me to be the very essence of prayer.

Père François was a bearded, jovial Auvergnat of about fifty who led us to our rooms, two tiny whitewashed cells with a bed and an earthenware jug and basin which stood upon a rough bench, and explained to us the curriculum and rules of the establishment.

As in all monasteries of the Order every monk was bound by a solemn vow to absolute silence for the remainder of his life. Only to chant the Psalms and responses to the Mass could he give utterance to any speech, and when the necessity for communication with his brethren might arise it was maintained by a language of signs.

They possessed only one habit of rough brown cloth, a length of rope to tie about their waist, leather sandals and a Crucifix. In this coarse robe, insufferably hot in summer and inadequate protection against the bitter Mongolian winter, they worked and slept and were finally buried.

At two o'clock in the morning they rose from their straw beds and proceeded to the church, where for two hours they chanted the Psalms of Matins and Lauds, after which every priest said Mass at one or other of the side altars. At five o'clock a meal of bread, fruit and bowls of tea, served in the Chinese manner without milk or sugar, was eaten in the refectory, and with the first light of dawn the tasks of the day would commence. Some were set to cleaning the buildings and the church, others to work upon manuscripts and books in the library, but the majority to labour in the fields upon which they depended for their meagre diet.

At ten o'clock the bell tolled in summons for all to attend High Mass which lasted for an hour or so, and after this came a meal of soup and bread.

From noon until sunset, when the bell again tolled for Vespers, all toiled at their various tasks, and when Benediction had been sung they congregated in the refectory for the evening meal which again consisted of bread and soup or some mess of vegetables, and afterwards retired to their comfortless beds.

Of all the garrulous Frenchmen I have ever met Père François was the most indefatigable, for he talked at random and without sequence, he repeated himself over and over again, his sentences were swollen with superfluous adjectives, he talked in French and Latin, Chinese and scraps of English, in complete disregard of context and often with scant respect for sense. We soon abandoned all hope of conversation and allowed this stream of words to flow about us without check.

One day, however, he fell silent, and his cheerful face was overcast with gloom. "I have sinned," he said, "I have abused the dispensation that was granted to me. When the Father Abbot told me that I was to attend to your needs I felt almost uneasy in the thought that I must speak to you. I was so unaccustomed, you understand. But when I started to speak, I found great pleasure in the use of words, for when I was a young man I was a great talker. Suddenly, I realized that I was indulging my senses, using this privilege to satisfy a desire which I should have sought to suppress. I have asked the forgiveness of God, and now I ask you to pardon me, for I fear that I may also have annoyed you with my foolish chatter. I was weak and sinful indeed, but it is seven and twenty years since I conversed with any man."

Père François is dead, and I cannot doubt that he is in heaven with his simple and good companions. The Abbot, too, and the entire community are dead, murdered by the people for whom they worked and prayed; the monastery is a mass of cinders, burned by the enlightened peasantry, the Communists of the New China, and I suppose the vines are dead too, for the Chinese do not care for the wine of grapes; but the plaintive tune of that *Salve Regina*, "Illos tuos misericordes oculos," must still be heard from time to time, I feel, among those barren hills.

# THE EARL AND THE ALCHEMIST—II

By  
CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

*Ferdinando Lord Strange, great-great-grandson of Henry VII and potential heir to the throne, became Earl of Derby on the same day that a certain Richard Hesketh came to see him, 25th September, 1593. On 29th November Hesketh was hanged and quartered on a charge of inciting English Catholics to rebellion. Five months later Ferdinando died of a terrible and mysterious disease. From the first there was a rumoured connection between the two tragic deaths. Part I, drawing on such different witnesses as Robert Persons, William Shakespeare, and Doctor Dee, sketched a background of characters and events up to the arrival of Hesketh in England.*

'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites. (*Hamlet*, V. 2.)

**L**ANDING ON SEPTEMBER 9TH at one of the Cinque Ports Hesketh made his way on foot to Canterbury. Although he had fled the country four years earlier to escape a murder charge, his behaviour was not that of a furtive outlaw. He did things in style. At *The Bell* in Canterbury he engaged a fellow-traveller, one Trumpeter Baylie discharged from the wars, to be his servant. Baylie was an honest lad, and Hesketh a kind master to him. His evidence about the next three weeks agrees reliably with that given by others.<sup>1</sup>

Their route lay from Canterbury through Rochester to Gravesend, and then up the river to London. Since Hesketh entered England freely, and was supplied with a passport, the presumption is that he got the actual document after landing, either from the Acting Secretary, Cecil, or from the Warden of the Ports, Lord Cobham (Cecil's father-in-law). This presumption is justified by an important and intricate piece of

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Hatf. MSS. IV. 408.* It is he who tells us about Hesketh's passport.

evidence, which need be given here only so far as affects the present issue. It is this. Some weeks later, on 15th October, Hesketh wrote a letter addressed: "To Lord Cobham or Sir Robert Cecil," which began: "*I have hereinclosed sent your Honour the two letters I promised. . . .*" (*Ibid.*, p. 389.)

Now, these letters were then sent in a disguised manner by the Government to Hesketh's friends in Prague, Stephenson and Falcon. They replied immediately; and Stephenson's reply says: "I received your letter . . . dated the 20th of September, according to your count." So it follows that Hesketh promised these letters either to Cobham or to Cecil before the date of writing them, the 20th September.<sup>1</sup>

By that date he was well on his way to Lancashire. So, well before that date, he had had an interview, or some sort of communication, with Cobham or with Cecil. Of the two, Cobham is the more likely because Cecil was with the Court at Windsor in September (his interview with Hesketh came later), whereas Cobham was probably at his house, Cobham Hall, which lay on Hesketh's route between Rochester and Gravesend.

On arriving in London the two spent a night at St. Paul's Wharf; but they did not stay long in the capital. They were not seeing Elizabethan London at its best. Along with the worst plague in living memory there was a good deal of active discontent, as well as a profound unease about the nameless Succession. They spent another night at Hampstead. Then, on the morning of the 16th, as they were leaving *The White Lion* in Islington, something happened which seemed casual enough; but, on inspection, it turns out to be charged with the most urgent significance. Hesketh was given a letter "from one Mr. Hickman" to take to the Earl of Derby.

Bang, for good, goes the idea of Hesketh as a secret agent—unless "Mr. Hickman" was also in the plot. Here is how Hesketh described the incident to his interrogators, in terms too circumstantial to be doubted:

<sup>1</sup> "Promised" means "promised to write," not "promised to produce," because Hesketh was in close confinement by 15th October. It is possible, of course, that the date was faked for some reason, and that the letters were really written much later than September 20th and much nearer 15th October. If the reader prefers this interpretation, he must make the necessary adjustments. But he will note that either interpretation is equally fatal to the idea of Hesketh as a trusted agent of the Catholic exiles.

A boy of the house named John Waterworth, in presence of the rest of the servants, as I remember, did deliver me a letter endorsed and directed to my late Lord of Derby, deceased, which they told me was from one Mr. Hickman, my lord's man, which letter, together with my passports, the next day after the death of my old lord were delivered to this lord at my request and for my discharge of the same letter (*Ibid.*, 409).

“Mr. Hickman, my lord's man”? It is not clear to us which lord. But it was clear, evidently, to the interrogators, Cecil and his law-officers; they did not afterwards inquire, “which lord?” It is also abundantly clear that Hickman had detailed knowledge of Hesketh; no inn-servant would have accepted this letter to an Earl without precise instructions. The scene is vivid: the boy coming forward at the last moment, the other servants watching. Hickman knew that Hesketh had returned after four years abroad, that he was due at Islington on the 16th, that he was going to Lancashire and would have to visit the Lord-Lieutenant to show his passport. In the absence of some other Hickman who knew both Hesketh and the law officers, it is a reasonable presumption that this was one of the Hickmans, already described in Part I, who were familiar with Dr. Dee. Some entries in Dee's *Diary* confirm the presumption.

Chancellor Hatton, the Hickmans' patron, had died in 1591 and been succeeded in the office by Sir John Puckering as Lord Keeper. In the August before Hesketh's arrival, Dee had been in exceptional demand by the Lord Keeper. He dined twice with him at Kew; and on a third occasion, 28th August, he recorded: “I was all day with the Lord Keeper. Mr. Web and the philosopher came.” The philosopher remains a question mark. But “Mr. Web” was Thomas Webbe, the agent, who had returned from Prague.<sup>1</sup> The Hickmans, who also lived at Kew, were much about the place. A typical entry is: “September 20th. Barthilmew Hikman came to Mortlake.” One may add another, for 23rd March of the following year: “I gave Barthilmew Hikman the nag which the Lord Keeper had given me. Barthilmew Hikman and William his brother went homeward” (their home was in the Midlands). Neither Hickman seems to have had a very high character. Dee later discovered that all Bartholomew's spiritualist prophecies were drivel and deceit. And, a month after Ferdi-

<sup>1</sup> If Hesketh shipped at Hamburg, he probably came from Prague, not Brussels.

nando's death, William Hickman offered Cecil £1,000 for the Receivership of Wards, with an extra hundred thrown in for Cecil's wife, but was refused.

It is too early, however, to follow up these suspicions. What is now certain is that Hesketh's reasons for visiting the Earl of Derby had been imposed on him by people who had nothing to do with the Catholic exiles. He had to present his passport (presumably signed by Cobham) to show that he was no longer wanted on the Hoghton murder charge; and he had to deliver this letter.

On the evidence of Baylie, he showed no undue anxiety to do either. Approaching Lancashire about the 20th, his first thought was for his wife and family; he did not turn east towards the Earl's house, but climbed on over the hard, high fell-country to Over Darwen. He joked about his wife in the letter to Falcon which he dated the 20th, and about his need to get back to her; so it is likely that he was a faithful husband. (His chief concern after his arrest was for her welfare.) She is described as "a painful housewife," with "many children." He spent the week-end resting with his wife; and then on Tuesday the 25th, he set out for Lathom, the Earl's Lancashire seat, still accompanied by Baylie, this time on horseback. But when they got there, the old Earl was no more; he had died that day. It was not the time to intrude. Hesketh pushed on to the house of his brother Bartholomew at Aughton, not far distant. His brother was away, but the household received him. Riding back to Lathom on Thursday he encountered Bartholomew and some friends returning, at Ormskirk; and they had converse together, but always in company. At Lathom he handed in Hickman's letter and his passport to Sir Edward Stanley, a Catholic relative of Derby's. His passport was examined by the new Earl, and by the Bishop of Chester who was staying at Lathom, and proved satisfactory.

Hesketh, having discharged his duties, was anxious to get back and spend Michaelmas with his wife and family. But Sir Edward Stanley detained him in conversation, in the course of which he told Hesketh that the letter he had brought was not important, it contained only the news of plague-deaths in London. It looks as if Stanley was sounding him as to what he knew of the letter; and it is clear that he accepted Stanley's story as the truth. Stanley then said that the Earl when he had more leisure would like to

speak with him, and wished him to stay for a day or two at Lathom. Puzzled, flattered, and embarrassed, Hesketh accepted, and stayed there over Michaelmas, during which time he met his former landlord, Thomas Langton, the Baron of Newton, one of the new Earl's intimates (also a Catholic), and was friendly entertained by him. The Earl saw him occasionally, but kept deferring any serious conversation. Finally, he said that he took so much pleasure in his company that Hesketh must go with him to Court; and he appointed a meeting-place for Tuesday, 2nd October, at "Brewerton" (or Brereton) in Cheshire. This was the seat of Sir William Brereton, a gentleman held in high repute in the county, though he is also named as a recusant.<sup>1</sup>

Hesketh, all unsuspecting, spent Monday night with his brother at Aughton; and next morning he rode to Brereton (some forty miles south of Lathom) in company with Thomas Langton. That night he wrote two letters and despatched them by his servant, the Trumpeter, from whom he now parted. One was to poor Isabel his wife, the other to his other brother Thomas, the anti-Catholic lawyer. They are worth quoting in full, as showing his state of mind at that time. To Isabel he wrote:

I commend me to you, desiring you to take in good part that I cannot come home again so speedily as I purposed, for that my lord that now is, having spoken with me somewhat at my first coming, did defer, by means of his sorrows and other business, the time from day to day; and having seen my passport hath taken such a liking of me that for his recreation I must needs keep him company to London or the Court, if by some good occasion I cannot rid myself. I have sent my man back whom I pray you receive and entreat well till my coming. I have partly left him with Mr. Baron [i.e., Langton] but to be at his choice to tarry or go to you. If he tarry with Mr. Baron, I have lent him the white nag, which he will use well, and no charges to you.

From Brewerton, the 2nd of October.<sup>2</sup>

And to his brother:

Having been so long out of the country, I was loth to come to you or any friend I had, before I saw how my Lord Lieutenant would accept of my coming, and the country think of me. It hath pleased my Lord that now is to request me to the Court with him for his recreation, which I cannot deny, but have granted. Brewerton, this 2nd of October, 1593.

<sup>1</sup> *Catholic Records*, VIII, 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Hatf. MSS.*, IV, 381.

On the 3rd, the cavalcade left Cheshire for the south. But the place and order of events are now not clear. All we know is that within the week Ferdinando had obtained an audience with the Queen at Windsor, and that Hesketh was under restraint in a house called "Sutton Park"; he was afterwards moved to Ditton Park, a house near Windsor.<sup>1</sup>

We do not know when or where, *or whether*, Ferdinando arrested him. It is highly probable that Ferdinando through his friends, Edward Stanley and Langton, had tested Hesketh shrewdly, and no longer doubted the man's personal *bona fides*. But he was thoroughly alarmed and put on his mettle by the thing that Hesketh had brought. It was to rid himself from the slime of some unknown aggressor, beyond Hesketh, that he rode to Windsor and went straight to see the Queen.

Hence, thou suborned informer, a free soul  
When most impeached, stands least in thy controul.

The interview with the Queen was all he could have wished for. He left her presence, glowing with gratitude and relief. It seems certain that he showed her the Hickman letter, because, on her own initiative, she commanded Hesketh to be questioned about it. "Her Majesty is informed that you had a letter unto the Earl of Derby" (p. 409). Had anyone else informed her, she would have suspected Ferdinando; and if she had suspected him, she would not have been content with Hesketh's answer. Hickman, at least, would have been called up and questioned.

Now, the really strange and sinister thing that we come up against is that, apart from this one question ordered by the Queen, and Hesketh's one answer to it, there is no other mention of Hickman or the Hickman letter in the whole affair. All sorts of other people who had had contacts with Hesketh—his brother, his servant, Thomas Langton, Henry Leigh—were called in and accused and questioned. But of Mr. Hickman, whose letter was the only sure evidence of any communication between Hesketh

<sup>1</sup> England is full of Suttons; and the only clue to this one is that it was probably relatively remote from Windsor. It may be that the Earl confined Hesketh within his own jurisdiction of Cheshire, and then had him brought up later on and handed over: in which case "Sutton Park" might be Sutton House on the Cheshire border where Ferdinando's family once stayed on the way to London. Or it may be that he still had Hesketh in his retinue when he saw the Queen. In either case, after Hesketh fell into Government hands Ferdinando would be—and was—excluded from any share in the proceedings.

and the Earl, there is no word. One can refuse of course to accept the argument *de silentio*; but the natural inference is that the Government wanted the Hickman letter hushed up, and that Hickman himself was employed by personages important enough to safeguard him from questioning.

Two other facts, already mentioned, must now be interpreted. The first is that Hesketh was given a passport, and, apparently, a pardon (a conditional pardon at least) for his flight from the murder charge of 1589. Such a pardon was rarely given *gratis* to fugitives; they were promised it in return for some use to be made of them, either consciously as an agent or unconsciously as a dupe. Now Hesketh's behaviour was not that of a knowing agent. That is the second point: his artlessness. He simply had no idea that he was handling anything that might mortally endanger either the Earl or himself. He allowed himself to be led like a sheep to the slaughter.

It is important to bear in mind the comparative simplicity of Hesketh, for, in considering his reactions to captivity, one has to decide: whether he was a secret Catholic agent (though that is now almost out of the question), or a Government *agent-provocateur* (which might at first seem likely), or a dupe in a complicated scheme who had to suffer because the scheme had misfired.

The first thing that happened to him, *before* he was moved to a prison near Windsor, was a quick visit from Sir Robert Cecil.<sup>1</sup> This important interview is reflected in Hesketh's letter of the 15th, addressed "To Lord Cobham or Sir Robert Cecil," which must now be carefully considered. It has four paragraphs.

Its first two paragraphs rehearse confidential advice to Cecil as to how letters can be sent to Falcon and Stephenson in Prague in such a way that they will not suspect them of coming through Government channels. He is particularly anxious that "Mr. Dear" (i.e., Edward Dyer) should not learn of his arrest; otherwise he or his friends would write to Kelley's household in Prague, and then the Catholics would hear of it and suspect trickery. In the third paragraph he claims to have had conversations with Sir William Stanley and Doctor Worthington in Brussels, and to

<sup>1</sup> The evidence for this is a note of Derby's of the 13th implying that Cecil had just returned from the visit, and a phrase in Hesketh's letter of the 15th: "in respect of what I told yr Honour the other day."

have left some notes of these conversations with his friends in Prague. These notes he now wishes to recover, "for the satisfaction of Your Honour [i.e. Cecil] on my behalf."

Here are problems whose final solution is buried in Hesketh's obscure past. Provisional answers must be contingent on the view one takes of his employment.

*What sort of relations did he have with Stanley and Worthington in Brussels?* He may, in the interval of his leaving Prague and coming to England, have sought employment with Stanley as a means of livelihood, or he may have done it under Government instructions, to pick up information. The latter is more likely because he does not confess it as a guilty secret; he avers it eagerly to clear himself from some other unspecified charge, "for the satisfaction of Your Honour on my behalf."

*Why on earth should a record of conversations in Brussels be left in Prague?* There is no clear answer to this on any interpretation of Hesketh's employment. There is nothing in any of his statements to show that these notes were connected with Ferdinando. But since he was writing for them at the behest of Cecil and Cobham, one can only suppose that they wished to establish some guilty connection between Prague and Brussels—perhaps between occult circles in Prague and Catholic exiles in Brussels.

*Why should Dyer and his friends be so interested in Hesketh's movements that they would at once report news of his arrest to Kelley in Prague?* This too must be left a mystery, but it may be that here we have a reason for Hesketh's guilty conscience which made him so eager to co-operate. The English Government was by this time highly suspicious of the alchemists in Prague. Dyer had come under a cloud that year; and Webbe the agent was about to be gaoled in December on the capital charge of "coining"—which caused Dr. Dee "a flight of fear."

The fourth and last paragraph of the letter changes abruptly to a cry of terror. The reason is not far to seek. On 15th October, perhaps as he was actually penning his letter, his official cross-examiner arrived, William Wade, Clerk to the Privy Council. Wade slammed him right from the start with the blunt accusation, maintained right to the end: that he was not Hesketh the alchemist, but Hesketh the Cardinal's secretary come from Rome to stir up recusants in Lancashire. The poor man's letter ended with an appeal to Cecil to correct this error. But it is unlikely

that he ever saw Cecil again. From now on till his execution he was in the expert hands of Wade.

The two sheets of his "confessions," dated November 4th and 5th, one of which is badly mutilated,<sup>1</sup> obviously do not give the whole story. But they convey an outline. They are mainly piteous refutations of the wholly false charges that he was Allen's secretary and a stirrer-up of Lancashire recusants. He keeps repeating that he "was never reconciled" and has "no credit with recusants." He adds, with a touch of nobility, that he cannot tell lies against his neighbours to gain favour for himself. He alludes to "delivering my message to my Lord," and adds this:

I would rather have lain in prison during my life, or suffered death, than I would have done this message for any Stranger's behoof.

This shows that he was not confessing a message from Catholic exiles, but another sort of message to the Earl which he had supposed to be innocent. This can only be the Hickman letter.

But as soon as he began to suspect the Hickman letter to be the cause of his misfortune, the written questions and answers ceased. The last knowledge we have of him is from a letter of Wade to Cecil, of November the 29th, the day of his execution at St. Alban's.

I was at the arraignment of Hesketh, as I was commanded by my lord Keeper, but the man did confess the indictment and acknowledge all his former confessions and declarations to be true, so that there needed no other testimony against him (*Ibid.*, IV, 423).

Evidently there had been some recantation of his voluntary statements to Sir Robert Cecil. He was trapped in the position familiar to stool-pigeons of the period, of having made declarations in the service of the Government and of then seeing the Government make use of those very declarations to break his neck. In the later propaganda story, he—

bitterly with tears bewailed their acquaintance, and naming Sir William Stanley and others, cursed the time he had ever known any of them.<sup>2</sup>

No doubt the wails and curses included piteous denials and explanations. But when they had died away exhausted, it was

<sup>1</sup> This one is in the supplement to the Hatfield Calendar, XIII, 493.

<sup>2</sup> *Sadler Papers*. III. 20.

Wade's task to convince him that a simple avowal of "all his former confessions" was the wisest course. A man might plead guilty for several motives: fear of torture, hope of a last-minute pardon, promise of favour for wife and family. All or any of these motives may have led Hesketh to mumble assent to the indictment, "so that there needed no other testimony against him."

Nevertheless [continues Wade], Mr. Attorney-General laid open all the plot and course of his treasons for satisfaction of the standers-by, in very discreet sort, and did make collections out of his confessions. . . .

"Collections," and "very discreet" ones, were certainly necessary. For the Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Egerton, had to avoid any impression that Hesketh had come over with a Government passport, that he had had a letter planted on him in London, and that there was no evidence at all of any treasonable converse with the Earl or anyone else in England. The only evidence there could have been would have been that of the Earl himself. But Ferdinando was kept out of the proceedings, as will be seen later, by an omission that cast grave doubts on his loyalty. Failing this evidence, the man could presumably have been arraigned, on his earlier statements to Cecil, for "consorting with traitors overseas." But it seems clear that all they wanted of him was an admission that would enable them to proceed at once to the sentence without trial.

Wade's letter continues:

My lord Chief Justice, before the pronouncing of the Judgement, did use a very grave speech to the comfort of her Majesty's good subjects by these and the like graces God had shewed.

This high strain is then broken by a homely interpolation, somewhat in the nature of a belch:

I would have waited on you to have made relation thereof, but am troubled with so vehement and grievous indisposition in my stomach.

Wade's stomach-trouble was probably not the effect of the performance he had just witnessed, but of his strenuous rehearsals to make it a success. With unconscious irony he ended by telling Cecil of word from Nuremberg that Hesketh's letter was well

on its way to Prague—"by which you may perceive that there is discreet means and diligence used to recover the instructions he had of Worthington." This was the letter Hesketh had written to his friends in Prague, "for the satisfaction of your Honour on my behalf." It arrived in Prague the day before his execution.

A missive purporting to be "the instructions he had of Worthington" was found among Lord Burghley's papers when the archives were opened. But its contents, and his secrecy about it, are enough to stamp it as a forgery.<sup>1</sup> Over a thousand words long, couched rather in the style of Polonius to Reynaldo ("... and thereupon here pause, and see whether he will encourage you to speak out or not"), and quite alien to current Catholic policy, it is not the sort of "secret instruction" any sane man would risk falling into hostile hands. Nor did Lord Burghley, being a sane man, do so. Challenged by the Viceroy of the Netherlands to produce evidence for his vague accusations of encouraging Catholic plotters, he did not produce this. Probably, like the other draft accusing Ferdinando of conspiracy, it was an effort to provide evidence; but he very wisely decided it was not a successful effort. It seems best to respect his silence.

But long before any possibility of acknowledging or denying it, the gallows were up for Hesketh. On November 28th—December the 8th and the Feast of Our Lady's Conception, by the new style of Catholic Christendom—while he waited in his cell, Falcon and Stephenson were writing him warm-hearted replies, and his homecoming was being toasted by Falcon's family "in a pot of bitter beer." It might have comforted Hesketh strangely to know that. For, apart from his wife, for whose sake perhaps he had pleaded guilty, there was no one in England who cared a straw about him. As he waited to be dragged next morning on a hurdle to the gallows, he had none of the comfort of dying in a holy cause, nor even of a great crime cleansingly repented,

<sup>1</sup> Falcon in his reply to Hesketh (IV. 336, misdated) speaks of a sealed packet which he has found according to Hesketh's instructions and is forwarding. He also speaks of a pleasant gentleman called Mr. Samuel Lewkenor who had just arrived, is lodged in Hesketh's rooms, and is sending back a letter of his own along with Falcon's. This Mr. Lewkenor who imposed so easily on Falcon was an agent of Cecil's, to whom he returned shortly (IV. 603). It is an obvious guess that he put the sealed packet where Hesketh (writing while he still hoped for a pardon) told Falcon it would be. But the missive purporting to be "the instructions" is dubious enough without adding this conjecture. Seals could be, and were, expertly forged in London.

but only the reproach of his own pusillanimity, and the scorn of omnipotent injustice. Still, the story (in *D.N.B.*) that he cursed and wailed *on the scaffold* is a mistaken addition. Fr. Stephenson's letter ended: "Farewell, good, loving, and beloved Mr. Hesketh, this present 8th of December. . . ." It may be that the prayers of a good man reached him in a flash of time, and brought with them a memory of warm affection and an echo of the vesper bell from the great Church of the Virgin at Prague. He was certainly more sinned against than sinning.

The conclusion would seem to be that he was a carefully-chosen dupe. A guilty man on other grounds, he was simple and ignorant of political tensions in England, but he had connections both with occult circles in Prague and with Catholic exiles. He was sent into Lancashire with a passport which obliged him to visit the Earl of Derby; and on the way a letter was planted on him, addressed to the old Earl. If we are right that Mr. Hickman was one of the Hickmans acquainted with the secrets of Doctor Dee, we can make a guess as to its contents.

It would be a cryptically-phrased astrological prediction (purporting to come from Prague) about the old order being eclipsed by the new, which might be construed either as "the bond cracked betwixt son and father," or as the rise of the House of Stanley over the House of Tudor, with a reference to the coming year of the Queen's climacteric.

The authors of the letter counted on it being handed to the old Earl, who was a stern but timorous man. The letter would have thrown him into a mixture of the terrible plights of Gloucester in *King Lear*, I. ii, and York in *Richard the Second*, V. iii. He would be led to suspect his son, perhaps of designs against himself, certainly of designs against the throne.

He would do one of two things. Either he would take the letter to Lord Burghley, that wise counsellor, and appeal to his mercy and discretion—in which case there would be consultations between the two old men, the production of fresh evidence (the John Cecil letter), and an agreement that the young man must be brought to heel, given a salutary fright, etc. Or, he would trust his son, destroy the letter, and do no more about it. In that case, sooner or later, some important personage would address him in some such words as these:

"One of your servants has laid a charge that one Hesketh did

bring you a *schema* astronomical. And the same has been talked of in London. You would have done more wisely to declare this business. You say you questioned Heskit and found him innocent of foreknowledge? But there is a paper which has now come to hand, which shows this Heskit to be an instrument of Cardinal Allen and Sir William Stanley. I fear that is not all. There was a letter two years past, which I had forgotten, but am now reminded of. It was a message to my lord your son—from *Parsons the Jesuit*.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond a doubt, the old Earl would have been scared rigid. From that time on, the heir of the house of Stanley would have been as wax under the Cecilian thumb—as indeed the unfortunate Earl William seems to have been, not to mention James I.

But, in the event, the authors of the letter had to deal unexpectedly with the new Earl, Ferdinando, whose portrait, if it shows anything, shows imagination, intellect, and decision. Ferdinando did the boldest and the safest thing. By holding Hesketh *incommunicado*, and then going straight to the Queen and winning her approval, he threw the fatal engine bouncing back towards the enemy.

But what we now have to consider is how he lost this great initial advantage, and became aware that the forces against him were stronger than he could fight.

(*To be concluded*)

## VAUX OF HARROWDEN<sup>2</sup>

IF CIVILIZATION PERSISTS in England, its historians are bound to turn with increasing interest to the first hundred years of Catholic Recusancy in this country; it presents such a record of civilized values being maintained by private religion, and helping in turn to maintain it. A parallel would be hard to find of a minority that suffered so much in the flesh and so little in the spirit; that was so ruthlessly shut off from the benefits of patriotism, yet kept so persistently its finest qualities. Persecution intensified over a long period brings with it naturally what we call the "persecution mentality": huddled, bitter and narrow, alternately fawning or fanatically vindictive. But here is the portent of a body killed and dishonoured many times over, rising

<sup>1</sup> For the John Cecil letter about Persons, cf. Part I.

<sup>2</sup> *Vaux of Harrowden*, by Godfrey Anstruther, O.P. Introduction by D. B. Wyndham Lewis (R. H. Johns Ltd., Newport, Mon. 25s).

again still endowed with the gracious humanity and sturdy good-sense that it inherited from St. Thomas More. Over three successive generations the total power of an organized government pronounced what seemed, each time, to be the final verdict: "dead at last, and dishonoured for ever." Yet what was the record of the third generation, before it too succumbed? It had founded the State of Maryland, the only example of religious toleration in the whole world at that time. It was maintaining schools where the humanities flourished as brightly as anywhere in Europe; it supplied also a distinguished part of the volunteer officers in King Charles's army. And it had produced, in Mary Ward and her companions, one of the most wonderful "feminist" movements that history has ever known. Behind this triumph of vitality lay a profound spiritual growth.

The importance of Fr. Godfrey Anstruther's book, *Vaux of Harrowden*, is in this, that the Vaux family story runs continuously and indispensably through the first hundred years of Catholic Recusancy, until their name perishes in the reign of Charles II. But to appreciate the merits of the book, one must appreciate the obstacles in its way.

Recusant history has suffered somewhat from ecclesiastico-Ciceronian write-ups of the original stark eye-witness records. The non-Catholic reader, and historian, may excusably feel that that sort of propaganda has been done already, more to his taste, in Foxe's *Martyrs*. It needed a literary genius like Mr. Evelyn Waugh to produce in *Edmund Campion* one of the few recusant studies that have crossed the bridge between hagiography and the average reader. Mr. Waugh shaped his material to the form that was intrinsically proper to it. But there is a vast field where the material has yet to be assembled in order to be shaped. This is what Fr. Godfrey has done in his labour of love and research, collecting a great number of documents and references, some of them very difficult of access. It cannot be claimed that his book is easy going for the fidgety type of reader. But it will reward the patient lover of the past. There is in it all that is needed for a "resurrection of the flesh." It will also be a quarry for the busy historian—though there are one or two incidental slips.<sup>1</sup>

But Fr. Godfrey's book is much more than a compilation. He has corrected another short-coming of recusant history, which, while stressing the martyrs, has neglected the achievement of those who went on "living and partly living."

The Vaux family had its heroes, and, even more, its heroines. But Fr. Godfrey has not strained them to exclude the more earthy

<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence that Shakespeare was ever an actor in Leicester's company (p. 99). The Lord Keeper on p. 211 is Sir Nicholas Bacon, not Walsingham. Ambrose Vaux (p. 206) could not have returned from an English college at St. Omers in 1586.

tendencies that one would expect to find in real life: loquacious, quarrelsome, amative, bacchanalian, and proud: because the point he makes is that of all the individuals who exemplified these characteristics, even of the highly Falstaffian and rather endearing Ambrose, it was still true to say, "They Kept the Faith"; and that means, that against crushing adversity, they kept also their courage and good-humour.

The story begins, as does that of so many of the great recusant families, with a prosperous lawyer whose descendants were ardent Lancastrians, lost everything under Edward IV, and regained it all under Henry VII. Thus we come to the courteous Sir Nicholas, the first Lord Vaux, of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, who conducted Cardinal Wolsey to prison. In the tragedies that followed thick and fast after the Royal Divorce, the second lord, Thomas, sympathized with St. Thomas More, but like many others he kept his counsel. Those who have read that grand book, *The Man on a Donkey*, will recapture in many similar pages, skilfully arranged by Fr. Godfrey, the sense of doom that darkened men's minds between the Royal Divorce and the Pilgrimage of Grace. It inflicted on Lord Thomas a wound whose pain and sadness pervade all his poetry.

He was a famous poet by the standards of his day, and one of the chief figures in the "little renaissance" that flowered in Mary's short reign among the successors of More's circle, and produced Tottel's *Miscellany* and the Heywoods' dramas, before the fumes of Smithfield blotted it from succeeding memory. Professor A. W. Reed in his *Early Tudor Dramatists*, has shown the likelihood that it was More's circle that begot and handed on to Elizabethan times the ideal of the humanist drama—with perhaps even a physical contact through the *Theatre* in Finsbury Fields. This is of especial interest because, as Fr. Godfrey points out, the third Lord Vaux, Thomas's son, had one of the earliest known companies of players, on the same footing as Leicester's. It reminds us that the third lord, William, was not a titled barbarian with Norman blood and simple faith, but little else; he was a great humanist gentleman, a "Whig," if the anachronism be permitted, rather than a "Tory." It is well to remember also that he was over forty-five and quite unused to hardship when he decided that he must defy the new penalties devised by Statute against the saying and hearing of the Mass.

In happier times he would have been a great patron of the arts. He was sweet-tempered, generous, highly rational, but diffident and vague about politics and money. In these matters he relied on his close friend and brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Tresham, a great renaissance magnifico like himself, but more dogmatic and assertive—one of the early English eccentrics. Where Sir Thomas would justify his recusancy

by deduction from first principles down to positive law, Lord Vaux would smile sadly and follow his finger-tips. Sir Thomas revered him as a saint. There is a good light on him at his first arraignment, when Leicester, who was out to humiliate him, complained that he had not knelt properly before the Lords of the Council. Lord Vaux, going down at once on one knee, apologized sincerely, and added, with perhaps a mild glance at Leicester: "the rather I hope you will pardon it in me, who through ignorance have committed this error, being erst never acquainted with the answering of any like cause in this or in any other court."

On this occasion, the imprisonment and fine (a thousand pounds) were for the unproved charge of sheltering Edmund Campion, whom he had first known twelve years before as the much-loved tutor of his eldest son, Henry. From this time dates an intimate union with the Society of Jesus which lasts as long as there are any records. There cannot have been any Jesuit martyr or missionary who did not owe to the Vaux family, over three generations, a debt of personal gratitude that can never be adequately expressed. Lord Vaux himself died in 1595, with his estate ruined and his mind impaired by close confinement and continual harassing. But during the fifteen years of his recusancy, his houses and those of his children and children-in-law had become the movable headquarters of a network of Mass-centres that the most determined persecution could wound but never eradicate.

To say that there were two Jesuits in England in 1580, and fifty-two in 1610, may sound cold praise to some. But not the most antipathetic reader of Fr. Godfrey's pages will be able to withhold admiration from the glowing, human characters of the second generation of Vaux recusants. From Henry, the knight-errant, who transferred his love of Campion to Weston and Robert Southwell, took over the leadership of "Catholic Action" from George Gilbert, and spent himself organizing shelters in London. From the sparkling Elizabeth, Margaret Roper's grand-niece, who had made a love-match with George Vaux, and whose heroism made possible the later work of John Gerard. And from Eleanor and Anne beyond all praise, who, hunted from shire to shire, kept house over twenty years for Henry Garnet, in whose hands lay the clue to the network.

They had inherited from their father his respect for the abstract qualities of government and his complete detachment from politics, but they were tougher and warier, more inured to the imputation of treason which had so tortured him, and more on their guard against the many devices used to colour it. The Gunpowder Plot, which was such a sweeping propaganda-success in nearly every way, was a failure in one of its most deep-seated designs: that of disrupting the hard core of recusant resistance. It failed to smash the loyalty and

courage of the Vaux family. In 1610, the dauntless Anne, with her pair of spectacles, was running a well-attended school to supply the colleges overseas; and the fourth Lord Vaux, Elizabeth's son and William's grandson, was growing up, cool and reserved, an impenetrable rampart against a persecution that was practically throwing its hand in.

Fr. Godfrey has collected and transcribed especially interesting material for the period covering James's accession and the Gunpowder Plot, and has made an exciting story of it. But where he is up against so many unsolved, and even untouched, problems, it is not surprising that his evidence should fail sometimes to clarify the main stream of events. He judges on his evidence, for example, that Garnet's confession of March 8th was probably a government forgery. But a suggestion like this which strikes at a main prop of the Powder Plot's credibility, raises more difficulties than it can possibly solve, unless it is followed up to the hilt. Having questioned the Government's reliability in this vital matter, it is confusing to find him accepting the Government point of view in disfavour of the personal honour and the personal assurances of so bright a figure as Elizabeth Vaux—assurances, it should be noted, which were made in a private and tear-stained letter to her father, Sir John Roper.

It is hard to follow Fr. Godfrey in this matter. The incident of Lady Tasborough shows that, well before the plot's discovery, an unprincipled attempt was being made to twist Elizabeth's private and quite innocent correspondence against her. Yet Fr. Godfrey positively strains his next piece of evidence to try and show that Elizabeth knew about the plot on the day of its discovery, and resorted to "a clumsy and ill-advised artifice" to dissemble her knowledge. Huddlestane's testimony, which Fr. Godfrey quotes, is one of his most interesting contributions; but his picture of Huddlestane riding madly out of London with "four of the conspirators" to bring the news of the plot's discovery to Elizabeth Vaux, is not in accord with the evidence either of Huddlestane or of Percy's servant.<sup>1</sup> The evidence is that Huddlestane fell in with Catesby at St. Albans, and travelled with him at a reasonable pace for about twenty miles and then spent an hour with him over dinner, at a time when Catesby did not know that Fawkes had been arrested and the hunt was up. When Catesby was called down from the inn by Percy, and rode off abruptly, Huddlestane felt no more than a vague alarm, which he communicated to Elizabeth that evening, lest Catesby might be up to some mad scheme in Warwickshire. That is the plain interpretation of Huddlestane's evidence, and, on it, Elizabeth's behaviour is seen as perfectly rational and correct. Her letter to the Sheriff, three days later, shows that she still had not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Gunpowder Plot*, by Hugh Ross Williamson, p. 173.

grasped the connection between the plot and the Midlands, which was so immediately clear to the Government; and her conduct after her arrest, as Fr. Godfrey most happily shows, was completely fearless and straightforward.

Another patch of uncertain ground which Fr. Godfrey has to negotiate is the Appellant controversy. An example of the pitfalls which abound here is his acceptance of the story that the Oath of Allegiance was framed "with the expert aid of an apostate Jesuit." There would be nothing inherently improbable in Sir Christopher Perkins having helped to frame the Oath; but in fact the only authority for the statement is that of the real authors of the Oath, the Appellants, who were responsible for the drafts utilized after 1601. Their object in making the statement was to deflect attention from themselves by slurring over the "apostate" and emphasizing the "Jesuit."

The only reason for mentioning this point is that to accept the Appellant distortion of history is to do a grave injustice to the third generation of Catholic Recusants. The Appellants were out of touch and out of sympathy with the main body of English Catholics in the early seventeenth century, nor did they stop short of calumnies against them. Hence, a legacy of reserve with regard to the Caroline Recusants which has persisted among certain Catholic historians—as was recently shown in these pages<sup>1</sup>—until the present day.

When Fr. Godfrey says of this generation, "there is little for the historian to record," he is not doing justice to the evidence he himself presents (there was in any case a deeply interesting spiritual life), nor when he says, "The dwindling Catholic gentry were no longer feared, they were treated with contempt." *Contempt* is hardly the right word for the frenzied hysteria provoked in Parliament by the extraordinary vitality of the Catholic Recusants. Some signs of this vitality were mentioned on the first page of this article. They, and other evidence which Fr. Godfrey himself quotes, make it possible that Edward, the fourth Lord Vaux, and his friends were more vivid and admirable people than has yet been admitted.

But it should be emphasized that Fr. Godfrey's reticence concerning the seventeenth century background does not impair the value of his book as a moving tribute to its subject. He is at his best in the last chapter, sad though it is, as temporal death is always sad, even when a resurrection is confidently expected. The Vaux title has revived after two hundred years. The Catholic Church has revived also. It contains a large Irish-English element; but that is an element which has proved its loyalty many times in battle. If any one thing is responsible for that loyalty, it is the still-living spirit of recusants like Vaux of Harrowden. Speaking of the only mission that survived in Vaux

<sup>1</sup> *Caroline Recusants*, Basil FitzGibbon. THE MONTH, December, 1952.

country till 1840 when the Irish immigrants arrived, Fr. Godfrey says:

The backbone of this little mission was a family named Carrington. Anne Carrington stood sponsor at most of the baptisms from 1809 till 1847, and was probably the priest's housekeeper. There was an Athanasius Carrington, a recusant, among the servants at Harrowden in 1597, and another Athanasius Carrington at Kingscliff in 1723, so it would seem that this humble Harrowden family has the distinction of being the only family constantly resident in the county, that clung to their faith from Elizabeth to Victoria.

This little shed, with the roof so low that the priest who laboured here for fifty years never stood erect in it, was all that remained of the Catholic Church in the county, and there it still stands. The contrast between this humble building and Burghley's great house at nearby Stamford is the measure of the triumph of the Cecils, father and son; of the father who ground the old Church to powder, and the son who instilled an enduring hatred of it in the hearts of the English people.

This noble and temperately-written book should do much to soften such hatred as still exists into an interest tinged with awe.

## REVIEWS

### TESTE DAVID CUM SIBYLLA

*The Anathemata*, David Jones (Faber and Faber 25s).

OSCAR WILDE, speaking as an artist, said: "The ultimate survival of the Greek chorus, lost elsewhere to art, is to be found in the servitor answering the priest at Mass." But a sign that takes you back to the Greek chorus will take you back a great way further still: to sacrifices offered on neolithic altars, to the first blessings of corn and wine, and further back still. It is matter for theology that the Mass includes these ancient offerings of Abel, Abraham, and Melchisedech. Up to three or four hundred years ago it was matter for poetry as well.

Just as in the ritual of Holy Saturday all the waters and water-nymphs of creation and creative fiction came to rest, "this innocent creature," in the womb of the baptismal font, so the most tangled by-paths of folklore, as for example in the Arthurian legends, kept heading back to the uplifted chalice in the Supper Room. The Old Testament, too, had easy relations with the Greek and Latin Epics. The average Cockney, looking at the altar of his parish church, could travel

mentally to any point in space or time by way of Troy or Jerusalem or Rome or Glastonbury, and back again without any shock of disillusionment to St. Mary's, Whitechapel. But since that time, and especially in the last hundred years, a huge *detritus* of knowledge and ignorance and advertisement has piled up into a solid wall that shuts off the average man from natural or artistic sympathy with the sacramental signs.

Mr. David Jones, *homo faber et catholicus*, has long been concerned over this isolation of the sacramental signs, as part of a general problem of words that fail to pierce any longer man's intimate understanding. On the blank and outer side of the rock-wall he has set himself to trace and to inscribe words that should be valid signs for anyone who shares any part of his background. It is a wide and deep background, but no special depth of learning is needed to share it. It would be helpful to have read some work on pre-history such as Mr. Christopher Dawson's *The Age of the Gods*, and to have some idea of Père de la Taille's thesis on the Mass, the Supper, and Calvary—as elucidated, for example, in Father D'Arcy's *The Mass and the Redemption*. But apart from that, Mr. Jones writes—as a Catholic, of course, but as a Catholic with a background of patient, kindly, Bible-exploring Protestantism; as a Welshman for whom the "Matter of Britain" is not ended; and as a Londoner born within smell of the sea. But none of these essences is allowed to find expression except through the fine impersonal tool of the artist.

I can allude in detail only to the first of his eight poems, because it is the only one I have mastered in any detail. I think that it needs not only three readings, but three different kinds of reading. You should read it first like a poem for a first "incantatory" impression. You will be rebuffed by much of it, and annoyed by the footnote numbers, but encouraged frequently by haunting and exactly modulated lines like these:

Under modes and patterns altogether theirs, the holy and venerable  
hands lift up an efficacious sign.

And:

Within the railed tumulus  
he sings high and he sings low.

And:

On this unabiding rock  
for one Great Summer  
lifted up  
by next Great Winter  
down. . . .

And:

Hissarlik, traversed Hissarlik  
mother of forts  
hill of cries. . . .

Then you should read it again, analytically, testing the obscure passages against the footnotes, not only for their meaning, but for the overtones which form continuous threads through the whole. Thus, for example, *tumulus* recalls the barrows on our hill-sites which are essentially burial-places, as well as the fact that from the earliest times Mass has been said on altars containing relics of the dead. Again, for the lines:

A hundred thousand equinoxes  
(less or more)  
since they cupped the ritual stones  
for the faithful departed. . . .

it is necessary to know that the Neanderthal man of 50,000 B.C., although he was not our direct ancestor, yet seems to have made the same hollow cup-marks in stone (denoting a religious offering?) as our neolithic ancestors of 5000 B.C. This prepares you for the significance of the Latin words that come later: *non perdidii ex eis quemquam*; and for the presence of the Shepherd,—

When on a leafy morning  
late in June  
against the white wattles  
he numbers his own. . . .

and for the sheep-numbering that is practised still in Lancashire in an extraordinary survival of Romano-British:

Yan, tyan, tethera, methera, pimp,  
sethera, lethara, hovera, dovera, dick.

Then you should read it a third time, keeping as many threads or reins as you can easily in your grasp. (Apart from anything else, this is a very good exercise in harmonizing the faculties.) You should then find that the massive rock with its delicate graphites opens up into a series of rooms or caverns. Through the window of the beautifully-described Supper Room is the hill of Calvary; but before you come to that, as the *Memento etiam* comes before the *Nobis Quoque*, there are many other hills that rise and fall, either by love and war like Priam's sacred city, or by oreogenesis in epochs before any creature had risen on its hind legs and lifted up hands to heaven.

It would be impertinent to try and describe the whole poem. But

one or two passages may be mentioned. The Caves of Lascaux are made suddenly luminous by the inspiration that, when the Aurignacians in 20,000 B.C. executed in paint their unrivalled animals, they were doing "in an unbloody manner . . . what is done without, far on the windy tundra, at the kill, that the kindred may have life . . ."; and the passage ends with a strong cry from the artist, "O God! O the Academics!"

And there is this, of the emergence of mammalia in the Pliocene:

How else, in his good time  
should the amorous Silvy  
to her sweetest dear  
her fairest bosom have shown?

How else we?  
or he, himself?  
whose name is called He-with-us  
because he did not abhor the uterus.

Whereby these uberal forms  
are to us most dear  
and of all hills  
the most august.

And there are the final lines of the poem, where it is clear, incidentally, what importance the spacing has for voice-inflection:

How else from the weathered mantle-rock  
and the dark humus spread  
(where is exacted the night-labour  
    where the essential and labouring worm  
    saps micro-workings all the dark day long  
        for his creature of air)  
    should his barlies grow  
        who said  
    I am your Bread?

The next three poems are very briny and boisterous; they appear to be the impressions that various traders and invaders in time have left on England. The fifth, "The Lady of the Pool," is a saga of London; it may turn out to be the most aurally successful, but at first sight it looks like testing beyond endurance Mr. Jones's admonition that every word should be given its weight. There follows a terribly vivid little piece about wood that has been worshipped before and after the Crucifixion. The seventh, "Mabinog's Liturgy," is the clear emergence of Our Lady St. Mary from the mist of trial and error. Among passages of varied attraction is the following bit of lilting Welsh-English:

Sisters, not so jealous! *Someone* must be chosen and fore-chosen—  
stands to reason! After all there should be solidarity in woman. No  
great thing but what there's a woman behind it, sisters. Begetters of  
all huge endeavour we are. The Lord God may well do all without  
the aid of man, but even in the things of God a woman is medial—  
stands to reason.

Mr. Jones, in his Preface, says of the whole: "What I have written  
has no plan, or at least it is not planned. If it has a shape it is chiefly  
that it returns to its beginning." This is certainly true of the ringing  
conclusion of the last poem:

What did he do other  
recumbent at the garnished supper?  
What did he do yet other  
riding the Axile Tree?

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

### VIRGIL

*The Aeneid of Virgil*, translated by C. Day Lewis (The Hogarth Press  
21s).

THE ART OF TRANSLATING POETRY from one language into  
another calls for gifts so rare that they may hardly be found once  
in a generation. The translator of poetry must not be content with  
translating one language into another, it is his task to translate poetry  
into poetry. He must be able to absorb the full meaning of his original  
and then call upon the genius of his own language to re-create the  
fine essence of it. For this he must needs be a poet himself and yet with  
a deference for his original that will prevent too obvious an assertion  
of himself. The result of his efforts will not be the same as his original,  
it cannot be that, but it will be something in sympathy with it and  
inspired by a like spirit. The translator of Virgil is confronted with  
the further and very formidable difficulty that Virgil's poetry, perhaps  
more than the poetry of any other poet except Sophocles, has many  
subtle shades of meaning woven into the obvious and superficial  
meaning of the words. This is perhaps what Myers means when he  
speaks of the subtle, unexpressed and infinite element in Virgil's poetry.  
We do well to speak of translating Virgil rather than of translating his  
poetry, for it is himself that Virgil gives us in his poetry and he who  
would interpret him to the modern Englishman must needs be a  
modern English Virgil. But if we had a modern English Virgil, if  
such a strange phenomenon were possible, it would hardly be possible

for him to be understood in our modern proletarian age. "Virgil," writes F. W. H. Myers, "has been, perhaps, more successful than any other poet in fusing together the expressed and the suggested emotion, he has discovered the hidden music which can give to every shade of feeling its distinction, its permanence, and its charm, his thoughts seem to come to us on the wings of melodies prepared for them from the foundation of the world." How can these wings be captured in modern English in a way to be appreciated by the English masses? We are reminded of those words of Horace:

"Pindarum quisquis studet aemulari,  
Iule, ceratis ope Daedalea,  
Nititur pennis . . . "

Undismayed by all these formidable difficulties Mr. Day Lewis, under the auspices of the British Broadcasting Company, has made a brave attempt to interpret the *Aeneid* of Virgil to the modern Englishman. That he should have failed to do his author full justice is no disgrace; it was inevitable that he should fail. But it was not, we think, inevitable that he should have failed so sadly. All that can be said for his effort is that it does leave some slight, some very slight flavour of Virgil in the mind. But we cannot help thinking that the flavour could have been more pronounced. Of the subtle, unexpressed, infinite element in Virgil's poetry we have not been able to detect one atom in this translation. Perhaps this is our own fault, perhaps the wireless has some subtle alchemy that can transmute lead into gold; this we cannot say for we have never possessed one of those contrivances. But we can say that far the greater part of this translation seems to us utterly lacking in the Virgilian timbre. Surely there are passages when Mr. Day Lewis does approach even if he does not approximate the spirit of Virgil, but they are not common. Very often he seems banal and pedestrian. He tells us that he has sometimes introduced a sharp colloquialism to hold his reader's attention. Well and good, but the colloquialisms seem to be on almost every page. What, for instance, are we to make of such lines as:

"Aeneas too was up and about early that morning"?

We almost expect to be told that he was frying the bacon for breakfast. Mr. Day Lewis also assures us that he has no desire to do violence to his original. But it seems to us that this is just what he does. What are we to make of "Guilty joys" as a translation of "mala mentis gaudia"? This is not the only place where he seems to us to have missed not only the music but also the point of the original. What are we to make of:

"Comrades, we're well acquainted with evils, then and now.  
Worse than this you have suffered. God will end all this too"

as a translation of those fine lines; "O socii . . . O passi graviora"? It sounds like the beginning of a speech to a young communists' association. We are told that the Emperor Augustus was moved to tears by those lines:

"Heu, miserande puer, si qua fata aspera rumpas," etc.  
but could anyone be moved to tears by the translation:

"Alas, poor youth! if only you could escape your harsh fate!  
Marcellus you shall be. Give me armfuls of lilies  
That I may scatter their shining blooms and shower these gifts  
At least upon the dear soul, all to no purpose though  
Such kindness be"?

And yet this is one of the better passages.

As an attempt to interpret Virgil to the modern Englishman this translation seems to us a failure, but it remains an heroic effort and, if it does not give us Virgil or anything much like him, it is certainly a "pretty poem" and we would give a great deal to be able to do anything half as good. It cannot stand comparison with Virgil, but it can stand on its own feet. To appreciate its real merits one must forget Virgil. Perhaps it could be best appreciated by those who have never known Virgil, never heard his deathless haunting music, and of course it is just for such people that it has been written.

BRUNO S. JAMES

### THE POLITICUS OF PLATO

*Plato's Statesman*, by J. B. Skemp (Routledge & Kegan Paul 28s).

PLATO's *Politicus*, *Philebus*, and *Laws* are three major works in the philosophy of morals and politics, and the *Politicus* is indispensable for the elucidation of Plato's thought elsewhere. It is, too, a dialogue of capital importance for the clarification of not a few matters in Aristotle, some of which, and sometimes in a vulgarized form, have been incorporated into their own thought by the Scholastics. The concept of *epikeia* is one such matter, and on the primary role of this concept (transmitted through the *Nicomachean Ethics*, V 10) the *Politicus* has much light to throw, for one of Plato's concerns in this dialogue is to ponder a philosophy of law (and of morals in the form of laws and imperatives and maxims) that recognizes that the rule of law is a second-best to personal wisdom and knowledge-in-

exercise in the particular moral situation. But the *Politicus* is in fact not much read.

Indeed, in English there has hitherto never been published a commentary devoted to this dialogue alone, and Campbell's commentary on the *Politicus* jointly with the *Sophistes* dates from 1867. The only moderately accessible edition known to me is that by M. l'Abbé Diès in the *Presses Universitaires de France*. There was a very great need for an up-to-date English edition. Professor Skemp's edition meets the need and could hardly be bettered.

It is a thoroughly professional job. *Plato's Statesman* comprises some excellent introductory essays on historical and political and philosophical questions, an introduction to the Myth, a synopsis of the dialogue, a very good translation annotated with admirable footnotes. The book ends with an appendix on the dating of the *Timaeus*.

Professor Skemp's footnotes are models of scholarship, and I might add that nothing of any moment that might contribute to the elucidation of the text, so far as I can see, appears to have been overlooked. A reason for the unpopularity of the *Politicus* is that, though it is a work of great scale and variety and though the topics raised are very important indeed, the discussion of them has been bedevilled for the modern reader by the concurrent exemplification of a philosophical method, the method of "division." The dialogue remains stiff reading and calls for qualities of imagination and for patience and humour as well as for acumen, but Professor Skemp's workmanlike introductions should do much to steer a reader intelligently through the varieties and sometimes vagaries of this uncommon book.

VINCENT TURNER

### THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES

*Sir James Jeans*, by E. A. Milne (Cambridge University Press 21s).

*The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*, by D. E. Harding (Faber and Faber 21s).

HOW MANY OF THOSE to whom the names of Jeans and Eddington are familiar through their superb popularizations of astronomy realize that their fame stands mainly on the technical contributions which they made to science as astronomers in their own right? Their names form in fact part of a trinity of shining lights in the world of astronomy, all one-time Presidents of the Royal Astronomical Society, whose loss to us within a few years of one another has been a sad blow to astronomy in this country. The third member was the late E. A. Milne, whose biography of Sir James Jeans is here noticed. His first six chapters are strictly biographical; but so much

was Jeans' life identified with his work that they introduce the reader without ado to the inner life of the scientific world of the time. It will come as a surprise to many to discover the turmoil of argument and criticism, of theory and counter-theory, that lay behind the placid lucidity and assurance of the popular writings. In the end it must be admitted that the big three agreed to differ. When Eddington presented Jeans with the Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society, he could not resist teasing the Medallist on their points of difference, and Milne's concluding paragraphs show him, too, fighting to the end.

Most of the book is devoted to an exposition of the original contributions which Jeans made to physics and astronomy. This part will not easily be read and evaluated by the general reader, but is the most suitable form that a memorial to a great scientist could have taken, and certainly no pen was better equipped to compose it than that of Milne. The last chapter, which is really Milne's criticism of the philosophy of Jeans, is not to be missed.

Mr. Harding's book, *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*, is a personal attempt to expound a philosophy of the Universe which avoids the epistemological riddles of sense knowledge, in the acute form in which modern science presents them. His style is imaginative, poetic and intuitive, and it is difficult and perhaps unfair to subject such a treatment to a rigid philosophical analysis. In effect he seems to wish to modify the subject-object relation by viewing the Universe as a single living entity. We are not living oddities in an essentially mechanistic and dead world, but branches deriving their fullness of being from a single life-source. While agreeing with Mr. C. S. Lewis in his interesting preface that any reaction against the acceptance of the world picture of physics as the sole ground for philosophy is refreshing, we cannot share his surprising hope that this product of Mr. Harding's imagination, devoid of any definite metaphysic, logic, or theological reference (except for a flavour of pantheism) may contain the germ of great and original thought.

P. J. TREANOR

#### A NEW PAUL TO A NEW TIMOTHY

*My Dear Timothy. An Autobiographical Letter to His Grandson*, by Victor Gollancz (Gollancz 12s 6d).

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING to speculate as to how many "good" reviews Augustine of Hippo would have earned for his *Confessions*. In fact, it would be an amusing literary competition to compose extracts from contemporary reviews in the "*Manichean Monitor*," the *New Statesman and Nation*, and the *Osservatore Romano*. My guess would be that the reviewers would tend to fall into three

main groups: the frankly irritated, the tolerantly patronizing, and the over-emotionally approving.

I am not contending for a moment that *My Dear Timothy* can be compared to the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, or even to the *Confessions* of Jean Jacques Rousseau. On the other hand, any sincere autobiography that is written with the express intention of presenting a self-portrait of a human soul "in the nude" for our contemplation demands our special appreciation and respectful gratitude.

The key-phrase here is "for our contemplation"—not for our entertainment or as a plea for our admiration.

Moreover, all three books share another factor in common: they were inspired by an overwhelming sense of guilt, or a sense of sin, if you prefer the term.

In the case of Augustine, the guilt-sense derived from the awareness of the extent to which he had caused his mother to suffer at the human level; it is easy to see that *My Dear Timothy*—dealing with the same kind of level of human experience—represents an attempt to atone for filial shortcomings.

It would be inviting for me, a psychiatrist, with the wealth of psycho-pathological material presented to us by the author, to review *My Dear Timothy* as though it were a "case-history"; but in this framework at any rate it would be irrelevant. Again, writing as a Catholic, one might be tempted to nag, seeing that from the theological point of view (Catholic theology, of course) the book shows no signs of having "a happy ending." There are, in addition, other points of attack, for the author makes no attempt to erect any defences anywhere on his long front.

However, this is intended to be a "good" review, using the word "good" in the sense implied in my first paragraph. In other words, this book should be treated with special, if somewhat embarrassed, respect as the exposition of the struggles of a highly-complex twentieth-century man to come to terms with himself, his special environment, and God, as he wishes He might turn out to be.

E. B. STRAUSS

#### SURVEY OF ENGLISH EDUCATION

*Change in English Education*, by H. C. Dent (University of London Press 6s).

MR. DENT BRINGS TO THE WRITING of all his books a close, first-hand insight into the central difficulties of the problems he is discussing. This is the sixth book he has contributed to contemporary debates on the changing pattern and "slant" of English education; and his long years in the forefront of the debate, as editor of

*The Times Educational Supplement*, have contrived to make him apt in telling reference. This particular book is the result of a conference in West Sussex in 1950, planned and sustained jointly by the teacher, the local authority, and the Reading University Institute of Education.

The five chapters form collectively, as the title-page claims, "a historical survey" of trends since 1902: from Balfour to post-Bader. But wisely the author has concentrated on bringing out the trends, with no risk of blurring his message by any conventional attention to stock detail. The book is thus a commentary on the facts, leaving the facts themselves, in bulk, to be gathered from the standard textbooks on the subject. At the same time, however, he sketches enough of the ground-plan to make the book as immediately comprehensible by the ordinary reader as by the student. And he has chosen problems that will strike both sorts of reader as the crucial ones: the motives behind public education, the increase of central control, the changing curriculum, and the relation between teaching and learning.

In assessing the stimuli that have accrued since the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge first conceived in practice a national system of English education in 1698, he redresses the balance of recent criticism by insisting to the full on the predominance of truly religious concern for the schooling of the "lower orders," while still underlining the paradox whereby "what was ultimately to develop into one of the most liberal systems of public education in the world... began with the idea of giving children as meagre and illiberal an education as possible." In analysing the steady rise of State intervention in public education after 1833, he rightly insists that, on the one hand, there was in fact no *doctrinaire* policy of State-control as such at work, and, on the other hand, that the actual advances of public control (e.g., compulsion in 1870) could not have come about had a public opinion upon them been really adverse: so great is his veneration for the strength of English traditional individualism. All this is sound, though it does not diminish the frightening extent of potential control by a Minister of Education under the latest Acts. Mr. Dent does well, moreover, to remind us that our freedom in education—against the background of the medieval licence-to-teach and the Tudor and Stuart experiments in centralization and indoctrination—is quite new.

There is great freshness in what he has to say on the three fields of actual schooling, elementary and secondary and technical. He takes the *dicta* of the modern Reports, Hadow and Spens and Norwood, relates them back to the predecessors in Bryce and Taunton and Newcastle, shows the shifting of emphasis in the short space of our own generation, measures how far the Grammar School tradition stifled both elementary and technical conceptions in the planning of the curriculum, and finally (without being drawn into the comprehensive

v. multilateral school controversy) speculates on desirable changes in the next few generations. In so far as all three types of secondary education have more than one tradition written into their current practice, he contemplates a split within all three, especially since there is still "an open conspiracy . . . to ignore the fact that entry is based on levels of intellectual capacity and to pretend that it is based solely on differences of aptitude."

The closing chapter, on the relation between teacher and child, has some timely correctives for the more robustious advocates of "activity" methods as such, and "child-centred curricula" as such. He adduces Sir Philip Morris on the theme that "we have fallen into the danger of confusing the subjects themselves with the *function* of subjects in the education of children."

Readers who expect that every book on education should deal *inter alia* with the fundamental questions of purpose will no doubt be disappointed with Mr. Dent's latest. But he is dealing with *change* in the English educational picture; and in the realm on aims and value he might well reply that there is not enough to make a chapter commensurate with those he has written.

A. C. F. BEALES

## SHORTER NOTICES

*Christ in the Liturgy*, by Dom Iltyd Trethowan, O.S.B. (Sheed and Ward 12s 6d).

THIS BOOK AIMS AT REACHING what is deepest in the Liturgy, and yet at making this accessible to the ordinary reader. It is, says the author, an *œuvre de vulgarisation*, which is, we think, to rate it too low: and though much is drawn from French sources, and indeed from Dom Iltyd's own lectures and articles, we would not call it scrappy. Dom Iltyd explains the "Christian Mystery," and "Christ's Sacrifice and Ours," and wishes, as we all should do, to see and hear the laity taking their full share in the celebration of Mass. He most interestingly narrates the development of the Christian Year (of course the oldest Roman year began in March: but when the liturgy really began to develop, had not the "New Sun" long achieved its paramount place, i.e. December 25th?) He would like almost all Masses to be sung, and many of the laity saying the Divine Office. Yet we are up against difficulties which may be lessening but are still unsurmountable, of which the chief is that most priests themselves are not trained to understand, love and explain the Liturgy. No method, perhaps, is practical save to form small classes of willing lay-folk to whom the Mass of the following Sunday is explained in detail. Even if but one

leading word be fastened on that may be enough to make the whole Mass significant. As for the Office, we may hope that more and more will use Prime and Compline as morning and night prayers (we will not allow ourselves to dwell on the drastic reform of the Breviary that we would like). They might, also, use the hymns of the Little Hours at the proper time. As for those hymns, the only Renaissance disfigurements, I think, were the insipid *pro tua clementia* in Compline instead of *solita*, and the dull *lumen* at None for the unclassical but beautiful *clarum*. Yet we cannot fully agree with the author about hymns. Certainly, *Ad cenam Agni providi*, sings better than *Ad regias Agni dapes*, but we cannot admit that the latter is merely "frigid, flat as a pancake," etc. *Vastator horret Angelus* sings just as well as the (to us) hideous *A devastante Angelo*: and much of Paul the Deacon's hymn about the Baptist (see p. 133) seems to us merely comic, largely because it is forced into Sapphics. It was not usual for the Wicked Four to perpetrate atrocities like *quae duorum principum* for *tantorum*—and anyhow, no one seems able to write hymns nowadays; even the pseudo-classical ones are full of false quantities, not excluding at least one instance in a hymn by Leo XIII, who positively loved playing the Horatian. And the great argument against the *whole* of Mass in the vernacular is, perhaps, that no one can ever "translate" the Latin so as to preserve the *Romanae maiestas aurea linguae*, and no one seems able to write a proper prayer whether in Latin or in English. This may seem a dismal review of a stimulating book!

*The Hidden Stream*, by Mgr. R. Knox (Burns and Oates 16s).

THIS IS A FURTHER COLLECTION from Mgr. Knox's Oxford Conferences, and his "store of back-numbers is full to bursting-point," so we may hope for yet more of these stimulating volumes. The same ground will often be traversed, because new generations keep arriving at Oxford, and even while they are there, their minds will develop and need to be told the same thing in a fresh way: they will assimilate it better, and the author's resources are inexhaustible, even though he keeps to the classic order—Religion: God: the Preparation for Christ's Coming: His claims: the Church and some specific doctrines. The Conference on Miracles is exceptionally good: that on Divorce, i.e. the problem set by St. Matthew, may seem to remain confusing—that is because in his realistic honesty he wants to put the critic's case as strongly as he can, and not place more weight on his reply than it can bear. Difficulties which will occur to only one or two may perhaps best be met privately: in public, a clear exposition of the truth is worth more than refutation of errors. In the next volume we hope he will lay more stress on Holiness as a "Mark of the

Church": we need to "sense" the uniqueness of Catholic sanctity which is quite different from "goodness," even heroic; and young people respond readily to life seen in *persons*, rather than to arguments. Is not the formula: "Facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam"? Mgr. Knox writes *auxilium*—not the same thing. And is it exact to say (p. 180) that the Church is loth to permit Extreme Unction save to those who, she feels, are "quite certain they can't get well"? All the prayers surrounding its administration assume, or at least hope, that the sick person is going to get well and resume his wonted activities in the Church. We can trust Mgr. Knox's versatility for all sorts of unexpected analogies and epigrams, and we beg for more.

*Saints for Now*, edited by Clare Boothe Luce (Sheed and Ward 16s).

THE EDITOR asked nineteen writers to contribute pages on some Saint who means something special to them, or to the world today, or "for any other reason." Two of the contributors have selected St. Francis of Assisi, and two, St. John of the Cross. Frankly, we do not see why the Saints chosen are specially suited for now, e.g., St. Radegund, written of by Mr. E. I. Watkin with the scholarship, charm and insight that we expect from him. Other very successful studies are of St. Hilda of Whitby by Sister Madeleva; St. Thomas More, by Barbara Ward; Pope St. Pius V, courageously embarked upon by D. B. Wyndham Lewis; St. Francis de Sales, by Gerald Heard, and the Curé d'Ars, by Bruce Marshall. But a good deal of new research could have been accessible to the writers on St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier; St. John (the Evangelist) transcends the powers of even Alfred Noyes, and St. Thérèse of Lisieux deserves a whole book (over-written though she be) by a man of the calibre of Karl Stern. But we say at once that the approach is good and free of the *genre vie-de-saint*; indeed, here and there a colloquialism makes us wince. Modern people will read this book usually at their ease, though they are not given quite a true picture, we think, of St. Simeon Stylites by George Lamb: his "pillar" was more like a tower, had room for three or four people at the top of it and (we hold) a parapet; and he did not at all "do nothing": generals and philosophers consulted him; emperors sent to ask his advice; he was known from Syria to Gaul. Finally, a personal but obstinate judgement. We think the jacket quite hideous; the drawing of St. Benedict has its "representative" charm; St. Bernard by André Girard is "illusive"; Jan Yoorts's "Canticle of the Sun" might be anything. We apologize for this maybe impertinent final note; but most of the drawings seem to us pseudo-modernist and affected.

*Geschichte des Konzils von Trient. Band I: Der Kampf um das Konzil,*  
by Mgr. Jedin (Verlag Herder, Freiburg n.p.).

**I**N THE FIRST VOLUME of his history of the Council of Trent Mgr. Jedin divides his material into two books. In the first he traces the story of the conciliar idea and of the movement to reform the Church from the Council of Basle to the dissolution of the Lateral Council; and in the second, entitled "Why so late? The Prehistory of the Council of Trent, 1517 to 1545," he attempts to explain the long delay in calling the Council after the revolt of Luther. The next three volumes will trace the history of the Council itself.

The long introductory volume is absolutely necessary. To understand the Council of Trent is impossible unless the student knows how obsessed the men of the fifteenth century were with the idea of reform through a general council. Pius X could crush Modernism by "Lamentabili"; but in the fifteenth century, though the Popes had won a victory over the difficult councils of Constance and Basle they were unable, unlike their successors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to exercise their autocratic power. The need of reform was manifest; but the Papacy was suspect; and the Papacy, after its experiences at Constance and Basle, suspected that a general council might weaken its power. The reform of the curia was necessary but men distrusted its capacity to reform itself. Moreover the papacy rightly feared the unscrupulous politicians like Louis XI who used the threat of a general council to secure their political ends. There was severe tension between the popes and the college of cardinals who attempted to limit their power. All this hindered the attempt at reform; but perhaps the real reason for the failure of reform is to be found in the words of John Nider, O.P.: "I have not the slightest hope of the reform of the Church coming about . . . for goodwill is wanting in subjects, and their rulers live wickedly." Spiritual regeneration was necessary before men appeared capable of carrying out the reform of the Church.

In his second book Mgr. Jedin traces the growth of this reform movement after the relative failure of the local movements of reform, excellently described in the first book. The Oratory of Divine Love, the Capuchins, and the Jesuits not only made reform possible but put suitable instruments into the hands of the popes from the time of Paul III onwards.

Mgr. Jedin argues that had the pope called a council at once to settle the Lutheran dispute heresy would not have had time to take root. This is a finely argued piece of historical speculation and his conclusion, because it is speculation, is uncertain. What is certain is that he handles brilliantly the familiar intrigues of the Popes, of Charles V and of Francis I which hindered so powerfully the summoning of the Council. Masterly too is the chapter entitled "Reform

without a Council" in which he shows the clerical bureaucracy of the Papal curia to have been one of the principal obstacles to reform. They nullified the reforming decrees of Paul III and his successors and forced Trent itself to a compromise.

Ranke prophesied the history of Trent would never be written because the documents were not available. Leo XIII and the work of a generation of Catholic scholars have falsified his prophecy. Mgr. Jedin has entered into the fruits of their work and has produced a thoroughly reliable work. The historian of the Council must have not only a penetrating knowledge of the ecclesiastical and political history of the time but be a theologian and canonist as well. Mgr. Jedin possesses these qualities, and in addition writes well. If the following volumes attain the same masterly standard as the first we will have a definitive history of the Council.

*The Miracle of Lemaire*, by Dorothy Mackinder (Macdonald 9s 6d).

THIS AUTHOR, who has shown that she knows France well, may act almost as a bridge between Bernanos, who depicted little save a diseased countryside, and the France that we are tempted to idealize. She bravely takes an unpromising district, isolated among marshes, and victimized by a "king," Roget, crowned only by his blackmail and mortgages. A neurotic or exhibitionist child, Jeanne Marot, declares that she has seen a "beautiful lady" among the bulrushes. Roget resolves to capitalize her and make Lemaire into a pilgrimage-traffic centre. Half the village is (superstitiously) on the side of Jeanne: the rest disbelieve in her but is prepared to make use of her. The real centre of the story is the aged, futile but holy parish priest, to whom in the long run the local doctor, schoolmaster and even Roget succumb as best they can, to say nothing of the local prostitute, in whom we find it not easy to believe. The book is certainly not a pious tale, and one cannot tell what happens to the impious at the end of it. But there is much pathos without sentimentalism, disgust for Pharisaism and even venal anti-clericalism without contempt. We wish that a similar sort of book could be written about England.

*The Conflict of the Kingdoms*, by the Rev. Clifford T. Chapman (Hutchinson 7s 6d).

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to give unqualified praise to this book, which really attempts much more than is possible within its limits. Dr. Chapman sets out to investigate the basic, perennial ideas lying at the back of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement, in terms of comparative religion and the psychological theories of C. J. Jung. This is clearly

an enterprise that was well worth undertaking, but it has to be confessed that we come to the end of the book without any clear addition being made to what we already knew about the subject. The author begins by looking at the ancient religions, with their recurring themes of what he calls the expulsion of evil and the impulsion of good, and finds the same pattern in the New Testament teaching about salvation. But where he is not obscure he is flat and platitudinous. Manifestly, life is everywhere conceived as the effort to overcome evil of every kind, partly by the sheer physical activity of work and the employment of various skills, partly by calling upon the help of God, however He may be conceived. There is a certain interest in studying the working out of this idea in Zoroastrianism and other pre-Christian beliefs, but where Dr. Chapman seems to fail is in a lack of emphasis on the peculiar characteristics of the Christian doctrine of the Redemption.

At the same time we must be grateful to him for criticizing, once again, some of the cruder theories of the Christian Fathers, leaving us in the end with the conviction that there is room for a thoroughly competent investigation of the whole question. Whether we shall be helped in our further investigation by Jung will depend largely on the extent to which his theory of the collective unconscious can be purged of its unconvincing and fanciful notions. In the end, perhaps, we shall be driven to accept the view of Berdyaev, with which Dr. Chapman's book opens: "It is impossible for us to conceive the mystery of redemption rationally any more than any other mystery of the divine life." But it is always worth while having our attention directed to these fundamental mysteries, and for that we can be grateful to Dr. Chapman.

*The Grey Friars in Cambridge, 1225-1538*, by the Rev. John R. H. Moorman, M.A., D.D. (Cambridge University Press 35s).

"THE FRANCISCANS deserved well of Cambridge," wrote A. G. Little. "To the town they gave a water supply: to the university they gave its faculty of theology: and Pembroke College owes its foundation to their initiative." And sixty years ago, we are told, Dr. Little was already urging that a history of the Grey Friars in Cambridge be written. This has now been done by Dr. J. R. H. Moorman, who incorporates in his book his 1948-49 Birkbeck Lectures. The history proper makes half the work; the rest consists of valuable appendices, such as biographical notes on the Cambridge Franciscans and an account of the dispute between the friars and the university in 1303-6 from a manuscript at Durham. The first Cambridge Franciscans occupied that part of the house of Benjamin the Jew that was not in use as a jail. From that modest beginning in 1225 grew a com-

munity that for 300 years was important in the life of the university, of the town and of the Order.

In the days of Lollardy Lydgate wrote that "Of heresie Cambridge bare never blame"; and in 1521 the proctors' accounts record the payment, "Pro potu et aliis expensis circa cofnbustionem librorum Martini lutheri . . . ij s." But by then Bilney and Barnes, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley were on the threshold or already there. No Franciscan is recorded as having attended the meetings at the White Horse tavern, and there seem to have been only one or two known extremist reformers in the house. Its life went on, fourteen friars from Cambridge being ordained between 1520 and 1538; and then in that year a deed of surrender was signed. Within ten years the friary was in ruins, the buildings having been demolished to build the chapel and great court of Trinity. Today Sidney Sussex stands on their site. Dr. Moorman's learning in Franciscan studies is well known, and the memorial he has raised is a worthy one.

*Annales Gandenses*, edited by Hilda Johnstone (Nelson 15s).

IN 1308 a Franciscan friar of Ghent, having some time at his disposal and a small stock of spare parchment, began to write an informal account of the Franco-Flemish wars. Nothing further is known of the anonymous author, but from his writing it can be inferred that he was an elderly man, of no great literary ability but fond of reading history, who wrote this account of events of which he was an eye-witness to entertain some members of his community. This work, known as the *Annales Gandenses*, has won a permanent place in the historical bibliography of the period principally because it gives such a clear account of the relations between Flanders and France during the years 1297-1310. Apart from this central political theme, the work is of definite value to the social and economic historian. The internal conditions of Flanders are vividly described: the local, and separatist, patriotism of the towns; the feuds of the wealthy cloth-making districts; the increasing wage-earning population of the great cities and their relations with their capitalist employers; the alliance between the duke, the wage-earners and the smaller guilds against the wealthy employers and middle-class "leliaerts." Its special interest for English readers is limited to a not altogether flattering account of Edward I's intervention in the struggle during 1296-97.

Miss Hilda Johnstone cannot be too highly congratulated upon her translation of the Latin text, upon her excellent Introduction, and upon the valuable historical and explanatory footnotes.

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